

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH SIKKIM AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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By

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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the topic of 'INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH SIKKIM -
AFTER INDEPENDENCE', for her Ph.D. degree has
completed her work now, under my supervision.

This is to certify further -

- i) that the thesis embodies her own work, and
- ii) that she has worked under me for the period
required under the relevant ordinance.

Dated: September 15, 1986


Prof. (M.M. Pandey)

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POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF SIKKIM

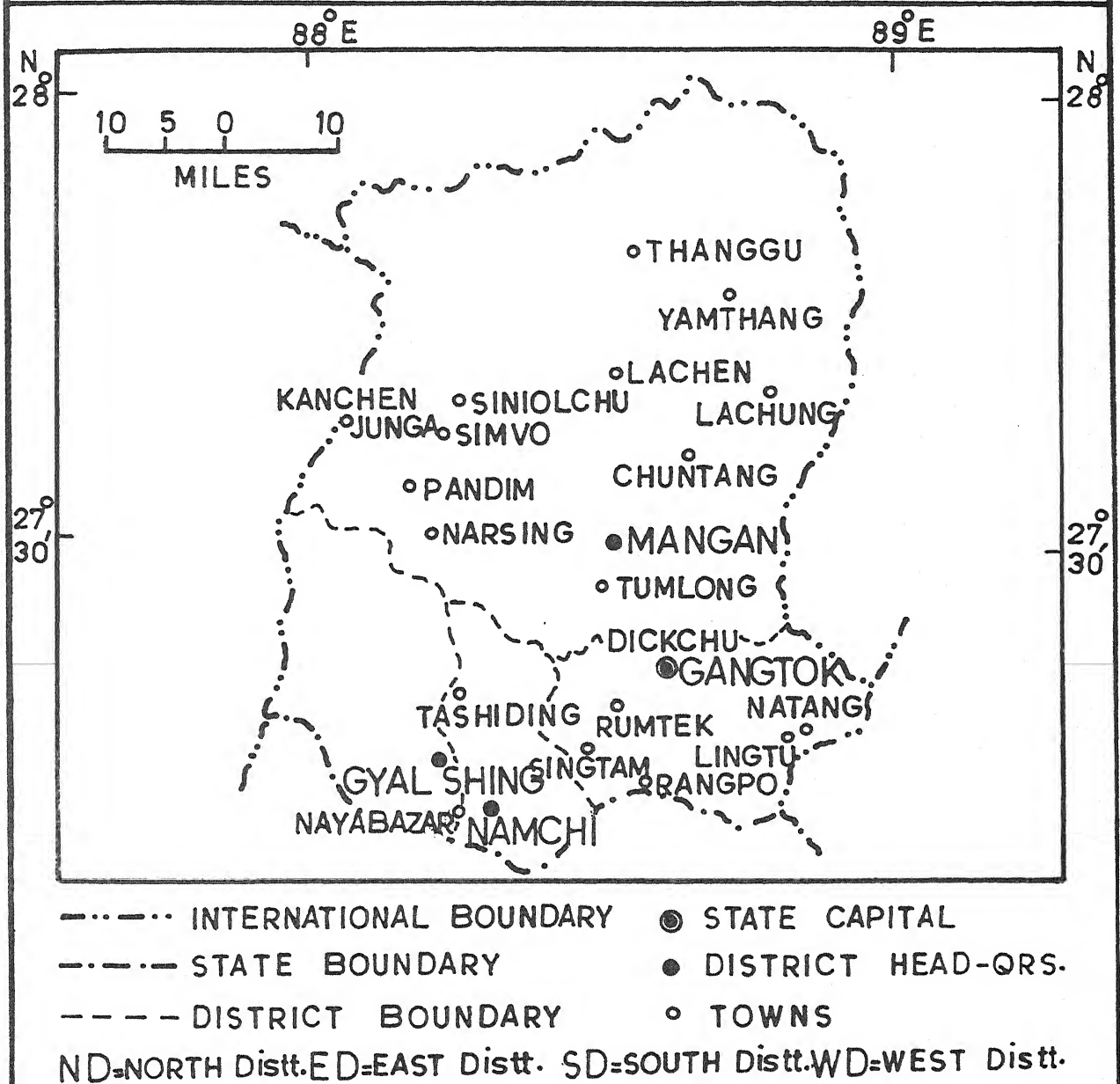


Fig.1

CHAPTER - 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Sikkim is situated between two ancient civilizations of India and China, but nothing with certainty is known about its early history, due to inaccessibility to the region.

It is supposed that the original inhabitants of Sikkim i.e. Lepchas have migrated to this region from Assam and Burma.¹ In the wake of Muslim invasion, some tribes from the sub-Himalayan region of India fled northward where they carved out a Hindu State² (Nepal), some migrated to Sikkim and Bhutan.

The present population of Sikkim consists of Lepchas or Rongpas, Limbus, Magars, Bhotias and Nepais. Lepchas or the Rongpas are the original inhabitants of Sikkim.³ Lepchas are markedly Mongolian in

1. N.Sen Gupta - State Govt. and Politics of Sikkim.
P-55, Sterling Publishers.

2. George Kotturon - P-1, Sterling Publishers.

3. H.M.Risteny - The Sikkim Gazetteer, P-1 (published in Calcutta, 1984)

features and differ from Tibetans. They possess finely cut features, and are smaller and lighter in build. It is also said that Lepchas have similarity with the tribes of Hangarang found in the North West Frontier Province and with the mountain tribes of the Larce area in Ladakh.¹ Others contend that the Lepchas and the Khasis of Khasi Jayanti area are two different branches of the same ethnic group.²

According to a mythological story, Lepchas are the descendants of a couple created by God on the slopes of Kanchenjunga. These Lepchas called their land Mayel Nyang.

According to another version the history of Sikkim began with the heirs of Maharaja Indrabodhi who ruled the region now known as Himanchal Pradesh. It is said that when Buddhism was waning in India some ad-

1. N. Sengupta - State Govt. and Politics of Sikkim, P-55, Sterling Publishers.
2. Arun Moitra - Sikkimer Adivasi Lepch : A Mukherji and Company, Calcutta, P-16

venturous princes migrated to Kham province of Tibet, where they established Minayak dynasty from which the ruling house of Sikkim emerged.¹

A prince, 25th in the lineage of Minayak dynasty, went on pilgrimage towards west alongwith his five sons in the first half of the 15th century. There one of the princes performed a herculean task by erecting a giant pillar in a chapel which could not be done by lamas. Thus he earned for himself the title of Khy Bhumsa.

He married the daughter of Sakya hierarch and settled down at Phari near Chumbi Valley, which became the centre of later kingdoms of Sikkim in the first decade of 16th century. Other sons moved towards south to Bhutan.

1. The Beautiful India - Sikkim, Sukhdeo Singh Chib.
P-2, Light and Life Publishers.

After remaining issueless for several years, he sought the blessings of Thekong Tek, the Lepcha ruler. The result was that he got three sons. Then he left phari, came down and settled in the vicinity of Gangtok.¹ Thereupon a blood brotherhood was signed between Khy Bhumsa and the Lepcha ruler.

Khy bhumsa was succeeded by his son Nipon Rab who had four sons. The four principal clans of Sikkim are said to have sprung up from those four sons. The fourth son, Guru Tashi, succeeded Nipon Rab & shifted to Gangtok. After the death of Thekong Tek, the Lepchas turned to Guru Tashi for protection and leadership. Guru Tashi's rule marked the absorption of the foreign ruling house into the native soil and also paved way for regular monarchy.

He became the first ruler of Sikkim² and was

-
1. Doig & D Perrin $\frac{3}{4}$ Sikkim - P C Published, N.Delhi.
 2. Namgyal dynasty ruled over Sikkim for 332 years.

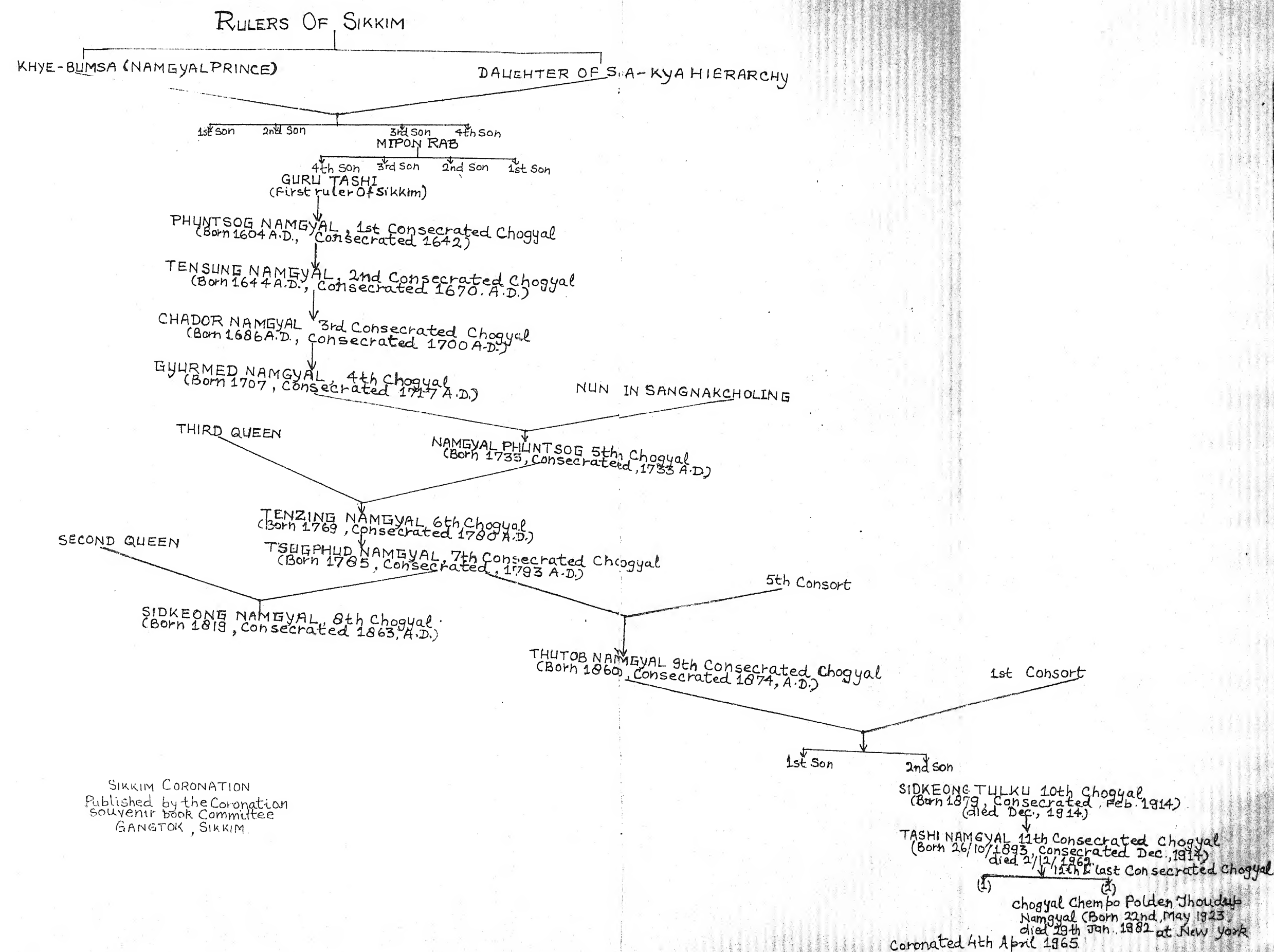
crowned as such. He was followed by Jova, Nagpo, Jova Apha & Guru Tenzing all of whom pursued the policy of creating progressively amicable relationship with Lepchas.

According to another belief Penchu Namgyal, the son of Guru Tenzing, was the first ruler of Sikkim consecrated at Yoksam by three Lamas who had come from three different directions of Tibet.¹

Some historians challenge this fact and assert that Gyurmed Namgyal, a descendant of Namgyal dynasty, died issueless. The situation was however saved by a local Lama by discovering a pregnant nun and declaring that she was carrying the child of the late king in her womb.² The nun gave birth to a male child who was named Phuntsong and consecrated as Chogyal.

1. J.A.H. Louis, the Gates of Tibet (Calcutta, 1984)
P-1.

2. S.R. Shukla, Sikkim : The story of Integration,
New Delhi. P-14.



Phuntsog Namgyal, the first Sikkim ruler ruled over a vast territory, many times the size of present Sikkim. His kingdom touched Thag la in Tibet in the north, Tagong la near Paro in Bhutan in the south, and extended upto Titalia near the border of Bihar and Bengal in the east and upto the banks of Timur River of Nepal in the west.

He was very influential and commanded respect from his subjects. Though a descendant of Indrabodhi, he was Bhotia by domicile and was married to a Rong girl. He was given the title of Chogyal (one who rules with righteousness) by Iamas.

Since Phuntsog Namgyal I, Sikkim became a sort of principality of Tibet. From 1640 when he was consecrated, the 19th century Sikkim looked upto Tibet for protection against political foes.¹ phuntsog Namgyal was a very capable administrator.

1. A C Sinha - Politics of Sikkim, P-13, Published from Faridabad.

He shifted his capital to Yoksam. For effective administration, he divided his kingdom into 12 zones, and appointed one Dzungpan for each of them.¹ He united Limbus, Bhotias & Lepchas by giving them due share in the administration.

Phuntsog died in 1670 AD. He was succeeded by his son Tensung Namgyal (born in 1644 AD). Tensung had three wives; A Bhutanese, a Limbu and a Tibetan beauty. The Bhutani wife bore him a daughter, Pedi Wangmo; the Limbu wife gave him a son, Chador. He moved his capital from Yoksam to Rabdantse.

The advisory council which was constituted by his father and consisted of 12 Tibetans was reformed. He reduced the number from 12 to eight and accommodated some Lepchas also. In due course of time, they acquired substantial powers & came to be known as kazis.²

1. S R Shukla, Sikkim the Story of Integration-P.15.

2. S R Shukla, Sikkim the Story of Integration-P.16

The era after the death of Tensung who died in 1700 AD is full of political intrigues fatricided war, between his daughter pedi Wangmo and her step brother Chador over the question of succession. pedi Wangmo approached the Bhutan king with whom she was related from her mother's side. The Bhutan king, Deb Raja invaded and occupied a large part of the Sikkim territory extending far west upto the new capital Rabdantse. Prince Chador had to flee to Tibet for his life.

He remained there from 1700 AD to 1708 AD. During this period he became a reputed scholar. By dint of his acumen & scholarship, he became the personal astrologer of Dalai Lama, who was pleased enough to bestow him a estate in Tibet and conferred on him high honours and titles.¹ The administration of Sikkim was looked after by Dalai Lama during this period.² Yugling Teshe, the royal coun-

1. Sukhdeo Singh - The Beautiful India, Sikkim. P-6.

2. S R Shukla - Sikkim - The story of Integration, P.16

cillar, was captured by Deb Raja who, with the intervention of Tibet, withdrew his forces upto Tagong La paving way for Chador to return. On his return Chador wrote to Deb Raja "Tibet was the father, Bhutan the mother and Sikkim the child, and the three were one family, one nation."

Despite the fact that Bhutan had withdrawn its forces, many Bhutanese had settled in various pockets of Eastern Sikkim. When Chador tried to clear them Deb Raja resisted it, which resulted in permanent loss by Sikkim of These areas, ~~which~~ including modern Kalimpong and adjoining areas.¹

Chador was murdered by his royal physician as a part of a conspiracy between his sister and the doctor.

Chador was a highly religious person, and propogated Bhuddhism with all his might. He commanded that the second son of every Bhutia family must be ordained a monk of pemiongchi monastery, which was also open to Tsongs. He not only patronized sacred

1. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-13.

places but also adopted religious dances, to keep alive the marital and native traditions & invented an alphabet for Lepchas.²

Eden has mentioned in the Gazetteer of Sikkim that Chador fled away to Tibet in the wake of political intrigues. This is contradicted by some historians. If the Reh Uming Chronicle is to be believed, it was not to Tibet but to the court of Mongol prince Gyalpo Iha-bezan that Chador had fled.

Chador's Tibetan wife bore him a son Gyurmed. Chador had an illegitimate son from his Lepcha minister's wife with whom he had relations (some historians say this incident is related to Tensung Namgyal's wife, not with Chador's).

Gyurmed succeeded his father Chador in 1717, at the age of ten. He married a Tibetan Abbot's sister with whom he could not lead a happy married life. So he joined monastery. He was immensely influenced by Lepcha form of worship. Due to his eccentric-

1. Sikkim - A concise chronicle. Sikkim Govt. Publication, P-9.

cities he alienated Limbu subjects who joined hands with Nepal. He spent some time as a religious mendicant in Tibet. While on his death bed, he disclosed his liason with a young nun who bore him a son Phuntsog.¹

Phuntsog Namagyal II's claim to the throne was opposed by Kazis or Dzongpans (local governors) under the leadership of Tamding. Tamding ruled for three years. Finally Lepchas under Chandzog Karwang defeated Tamding who fled away to Tibet.

To settle the dispute of succession an enquiry under Rabden Serpa was instituted by the Tibetan Govt. On the pretext of enquiry Rabden Serpa ruled Sikkim for 5 years.²

During Rabden Serpa's regency a convention representing all shades of opinion was held which defined the functions, powers & responsibilities

1. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-15.

2. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-16.

of the Govt.¹ An agreement between the regent and the convention was reached, as a result of which Phuntsog was consecrated the ruler and certain reforms were introduced giving greater share to Lepchas in the administration.²

During Regency Sikkim lost the allegiance of Magars for ever. In 1752 Tsongs also rose up in arms, but their rebellion was suppressed tactfully by Chandzog Karwang. The rise of Gurkhas also posed a threat to Sikkim. In the later years of Phuntsog Raja Prithi Narain Shah invaded Sikkim.³ It is alleged that Chandzog Karwang joined hands with Prithi Narain Shah to invade Sikkim,⁴ but this seems to be an exaggeration as his son Chothup earned the sobriquet Satarjit after his victory over Nepalis.⁵

1. The beautiful India - Chib : P-7

2. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-15

3. Chib - Beautiful India - Sikkim: P-7

4. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-17

5. Sikkim Gazetteer: P-17

Bhutan also invaded Sikkim and occupied all the areas, east of Tista, but withdrew to the present frontier after negotiations at Rhenock.

The Gurkha invasion was beaten back seventeen times. A peace agreement with Nepal was signed in 1775 and Gurkhas promised to refrain from further attacks on Sikkim and collaboration with Bhutanese. At a later stage however, they violated the treaty and occupied eastern Sikkim.

Tenzing Namyal, born in 1769, succeeded his father Phuntsog Namgyal in 1780. He married Anyo Gyalmo the daughter of Chandzog Karwang who bore him a son Choephoe in 1785. During his reign the two powers of Bhutan and Nepal were consolidating their positions. By about 1770 the Bhutan had overrun all Sikkim east of Tista while some of their spies or scouts had actually reached as far as Mang barn below Barphung. But the Bhutanese forces which were concentrated at Ralong Samdong

were utterly defeated and had to flee across Tam
La Precipice below Mufila.

In 1775, Raja Sinha Pratap Shah attempted
to invade Sikkim, but failed in his attempt at the
intervention of Tibet. In 1788-89 Gurkha forces
under General Jor Singh secretly crossed Chiabhan-
jan pass and penetrated unobserved upto Kalhait.
Raja and Rani of Sikkim fled away for their lives
and prince Tsugphud Namgyal was saved by Phodang Lama.
All Sikkim South and west of Tista was occupied by
Gurkhas. Sikkim recovered all its land with the help
of Tibet.¹

Tsugphud Namgyal succeeded in 1793 and had
the largest span of rule till 1864, he was a very bri-
lliant lad and many believed him to be the incarnation
of Mangushri i.e. Bodhisatva of Wisdom.²

During his reign the British power succeeded
in penetrating into Himalay and British trade reached
Tibet across the Himalay and Sikkim fell pray to Bri-
tish diplomacy. Henceforth the history of Sikkim is
the history of British Sikkim relations.

1. Sikkim Gazetteer : P-8.

2. The Beautiful India : P-17 : Chib.

LAND AND THE PEOPLE:

Sikkim is an appellation of Nepal origin, meaning 'New Palace'.¹ Tibetans call it Denzong or the land of rice. It was known to Lepchas as Nye-Na-el or heaven.² To some Nepalese Sikkim means - 'the land of the mountain crests'.

Sikkim is a tiny Himalayan kingdom (now, the 22nd state of India). It is surrounded by Bhutan in the east, Darjeeling in the south, Nepal in the west, Chumbi valley & Tsang region of Tibet in the north.

Sikkim is a land of immense panoramic beauty with rich flora and fauna, a Changing pattern of sunshine and shadow, and Kanchanjunga the third highest peak in the world.

The total area of Sikkim is about 7096 Sq. kms^{*}, of which one third is forest, the greatest

1. Jan Lovis - The Gates of Tibet - A bird's eye view of independent Sikkim Bhutan & Dooars.

2. A K Das & S K Banerji - The Lepchas of Darjeeling District.

* Statistical Pocket Book

Sikkim 1981, p 5

asset of the kingdom. Forest occupies 310 Sq. miles in the eastern zone, while in the western zone, which is intensely cultivated, forest covers only 203 to 235 Sq. miles. In the lower ranges and valleys, apart from dense original forests, there are valuable plantations of sal, simol, & bamboo. Acres of coniferous trees reach the snow line in Northern Sikkim which we reach after wading waist high in the less dense forests of flamboyant Rhodendron. This forest wealth of Sikkim is not exploited to the full because of inaccessibility to the northern west region. The Nature of terrain, the diversity in climatic conditions, the wide variations in elevation, and precipitation, have resulted in a very low yield of agricultural output. Agricultural attention is divided amongst cereal crops, commercial crops and animal products, Besides rice and corn, cardamon, Citrus fruits, apples and pine apples and potatos are the major cash crops, grown on high altitudes of 5,000 to 6,000 feet, mostly in the southern region of the state.

PEOPLE:-

Sikkim is a heterogeneous mixture of three main distinct ethnic groups i.e. Lepchas, Bhotias and Nepalese besides few smaller groups of Limbus and Magars.

LEPCHAS:

Lepcha is anglicised pronunciation of Nepali word 'Lapcha', Lap means vile and Cha means speaker. Nepalis gave this name contemptuously as they refused to adopt Nepali dialect. Some scholars believe Lepcha is a fish found in Nepal. Lepchas are also called Rongpas or the ravine folk. Tibetans call them Mon-ba or Mon-rik, people of Mon country, a general Tibetan name for lower Himalayas from Kashmir to Assam & Burma.¹

Lepchas are supposed to be original inhabitants. The hills, the mountains, and the streams have generally lepcha names which supports this view.

1. L.A. - Waddel Page- 92-93.

Lepchas are in a minority. They are shy of strangers and prefer to live in solitude. They are cheerful, intelligent and inquisitive in nature. According to Claude White, they are great nature-lovers and good entomologists & botanists, and have their own names for every animal, insect & plant.

Lepchas are strong. They can walk steep climbs and winding paths. They can walk miles together which has given them marvellous understanding of different strains of flowers, birds and butterflies.

The pressure of Limbus from the south west & of Bhotias from the north forced them to move more and more towards the shadow of Kanchanjunga. There they have flourished as a cultural group for centuries, Natural calamities like storms & floods which wrought death and destruction, forced them to believe in malignant spirits & thus they became extremely superstitious. Originally they were animists but with the arrival of Bhotias from Tibet - They professed Buddhism.

The folklore of Lepchas reveals their panoramic culture. They had fine sense of good and bad and

their mythological concept of the world shows, they excelled in ingenuity.

Lepchas believe that God Rum created every thing the sun, the moon, the stars the Earth, the mountains the forests, the plants and the animals. God took two balls of snow from the top of Kanchenjunga with the snow in his right hand He created a man and called him Phadong thing, which means the most powerful, with the snow in his left hand He created a woman Najyonguyle. This pair is believed to be the first parents of Lepchas.¹

Lepchas' new year celebrations consist of the final destruction of the effigy of Evil. Lepchas have shown a remarkable understanding of moral and ethical values which is extraordinary for a small tribal people.

Ancient Lepchas did not have the institution of marriage, They widely practised polygamy. It was a society of free sex. They lived mainly on agriculture and hunting. Land was in plenty. Accumulation of wealth was regarded to be sin.

1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan : Page-20.

As the time passed, Lepchas started organising themselves in a social order. During the formative period of their cultural evolution they started electing their tribal chief who was their friend, philosopher & guide. Gradually their close contact with Tibetans and Nepalese brought them out from drudgery.

Before the arrival of Buddhism, Lepchas were Shamanists, variously described as believers in 'Mon' faith or 'Mun' faith. Belief in good and bad spirits form the basis of this faith. Mun served as the oracle as well as the witch doctor of the tribe.

LIMBUS:-

Limbus are a distinct group of Nepali Ethnic community. They are believed to have come from Tsongpa valley, once a part of Tibet, but now forming a part of Limbuvana district of Nepal. At one time this tract was under the possession of Sikkim.¹ Limbus are also called as Tsongs. They live in Lachen valley of Sikkim

1. The Beautiful India & Sikkim - Chib : P-59.

Though they are attractive, they are less intelligent, superstitious and suspicious in nature. They are also called as yak-Thamba or Yak-herders.

The Origin of Limbus is shrouded in mystery. One account speaks of them having come from Kashi or modern Varanasi. They are supposed to be descendents of ten brothers who left their homeland possibly at the on slaught of Aryans, and settled down in the mountains of Eastern Himalayas.¹ In the beginning, Limbus were oppressed by the king of the land, but gradually they asserted themselves and formed a country of their own. They had to fight with Lepchas occasionally but gradually inter-marriages between them started strengthening the bond between two communities.

BHOTIAS:

Bhotias or Tibetans, are the earliest immigrants to Sikkim. They came to Sikkim in the 15th Century as graziers and missionaries. At that time Sikkim was sparsely populated with primitive tribes of Lepchas and Limbus, who were most gullible and vulnerable,

1. The Himalayan Gate Way: Feorge Kotturan: Page-23

Graziers and Missionaries were followed by traders and peasants who came here in search of new rice land. They found in Sikkim what they called Be-Yul-Denzong (The hidden valley of rice). The Bhotia immigrants who hailed from Tibeto-Burman Stock, imported from Tibet, its culture, language, lamaism & a combination of pastoralism and semi settled agricultural pattern. Bhotias are also image makers. They make statues from bronze and clay in which they compounded the ashes of saintly Lamas. They also wrote prayers and sacred texts on those images. Among Bhutias are found, painters, wood carvers and carpet makers also.

Bhutias overpowered Lepchas and with the help of Tibet, a Bhotia patriarch was consecrated as the king of Sikkim. Lepchas remained in a subservient state until Sikkim became the 22nd state of India.

Bhutias who came from Kham tract of Tibet are also known as Khampas. They are good traders

and agriculturists. Bhotias are husky and rugged herdsmen. One can find them tending yaks and sheep at high altitudes. With Mongoloid features and good physique Bhotias are good warriors. They prefer to live in cooler regions of high altitudes. They always received privileged treatment from Chogyals.¹

NEPALESE:-

More than one third population of the state today is Nepalese. Some of them settled here during Gorkha invasion. Later they were brought to Sikkim by British authorities for road building. Very soon they occupied most of the southern part of Sikkim as agriculturists. For many years they were not granted citizenship. The cheerful, tough and hardy Nepalese multiplied very rapidly. Within a century they out-numbered Lepchas and Bhotias.

In fact Nepalese are responsible for economic growth of Sikkim. They cleared large tracts of

1. Sikkim - A Concise Chronicle : P-13.

wood lands and introduced settled agriculture. With the exception of sherpas, who live mainly in the extreme west of the country, and Tamangs both of whom are Budhists, the Nepalese at present - are all Hindus by religion. All the Nepalese speak their own language. Much of the glitter of Gangtok Bazar is the gift of Nepalese. They fashion golden dragon rings, silver votive cups and ornaments using most primitive tools.

Economic Activity:-

The environmental conditions being extreme, restrict man's economic activity. The economic life of the people is mainly centered round forest produce. Due to lack of transporation facilities, full exploitation of forest resources is not possible. The total outturn of forest products in terms of money is twenty one lakhs² per year, from the sale

1. Census of India - 1961, New Delhi: P-49.
2. Statistical Pocket Book - Sikkim, 1981: P-45.

FORESTS
Outturn of Forest Products

Item	Quantity (Cu. M)	Value Rs. (000)
(1)	(2)	(3)
Timber	5720	368
Round Wood	2700	363
Fire wood	1500	526
Charcoal	—	382
Medicinal herbs	—	391
Cardamom	—	117
Others	—	2100

Chart No 1

AGRICULTURE
Area under principal crops 1980-81.

Crop	(hectares)				
	North	East	South	West	Sikkim
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Maize	1,596	4,806	14,898	9,621	30,921
Paddy	1,276	7,176	3,633	3,022	15,107
Millets	123	766	1,424	2,782	5,065
Pulses	782	807	1,021	1,007	3,617
Wheat	212	594	451	989	2,246
Barley	13	16	155	353	537
Cardamom	3,694	5,670	619	4,064	14,047
Potato	60	100	91	682	939

Chart No 2

of timber, round wood, fire wood, charcoal, medicinal herbs, cardamom and others. (vide chart No.1)

Farming has traditionally been influenced by the nature of terrain and diversity of climatic conditions. The total area under cultivation is - Seventy two thousand four hundred and eighty hectares. The main crops are maize, paddy, millets, pulses, wheat, barley, cardamom and potato. The districtwise agricultural out-put is given in Chart No. 2.¹ Approximately ninety percent of the people in Sikkim depend on agriculture.²

Huge flights of terraces are built on the slopes of the mountain for rice cultivation. The rice grown in Sikkim is very much in demand in plains. In the northern part of Sikkim citrus fruits are grown in abundance. Sikkim's oranges are famous for their sweetness. In the warmer climate of southern foothills

1. Statistical Pocket Book - Sikkim : P.31.

2. The Himalayan Gateway- History and Culture of Sikkim- By George Kotturan: P-156.

mangoes, bananas and guavas are grown. Lachen and Lachung valleys are suitable for apple orchards.

A considerable part of Sikkim consists of pastures where cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, and yaks are kept. A large number of poultry farms are also there.

In recent years, particularly after the merger of Sikkim in India, small scale industries have come up. They are mainly forest-based, such as articles made from wood, fruit preservation industries and handicraft.

Another economic activity of recent origin is in the field of fisheries. In 1980-81, 24 tonnes of fish were produced. The Sixth Plan(1980-85) made a provision of Rs. 1 crore for the development of fisheries in the state.

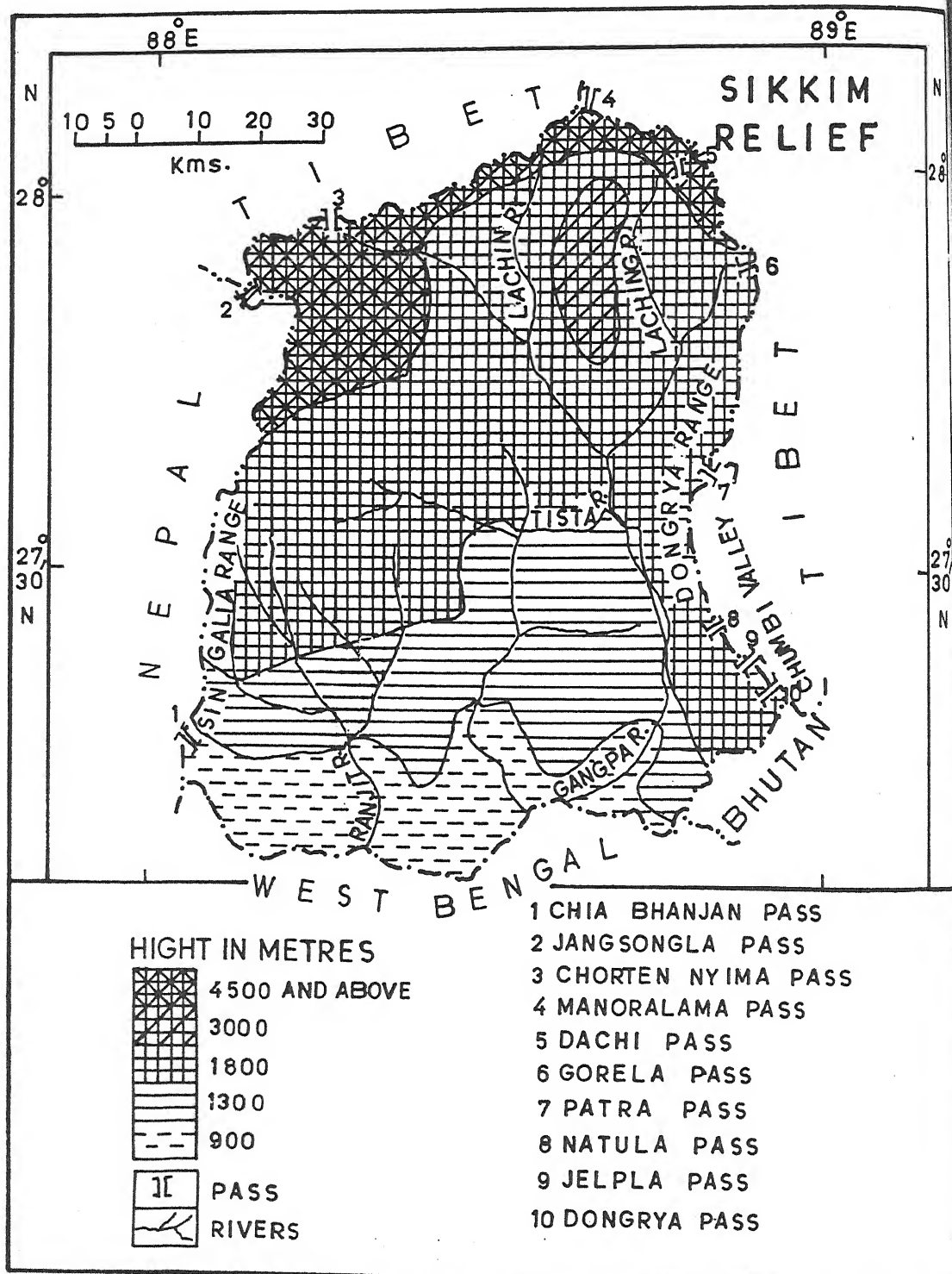


Fig. 2

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING:

Sikkim is located between 28°07'48" and 27°04'46" north latitudes and 88°00'58" and 88°55'25" east longitudes, and is bounded on north by Tibet, in the west by Nepal in the east by Bhutan in the south by Darjeeling (West Bengal).¹

It lies south of the main Himalayan range: Except in the south it is separated from neighbours, by great mountain ranges, ranging from 10,000 feet to 28,000 feet in height. These mountain ranges contain some very important passes. Chola range which forms the eastern boundry of Sikkim contains Nathu la (15,512') and Jelep la (13,254'). The Singalila range which forms the boundery, between Sikkim and Nepal contains the important pass of Chiabhanjan (10,320').

Himalayan ranges in Sikkim have some very high peaks in the world such as Kanchenjunga (28,140'), Kinchinjhan (22,700') Siniolchu (22,620') and Chomiono (22,386').²

1. Sikkim Govt. and politics: By S K Jha & S N Misra.

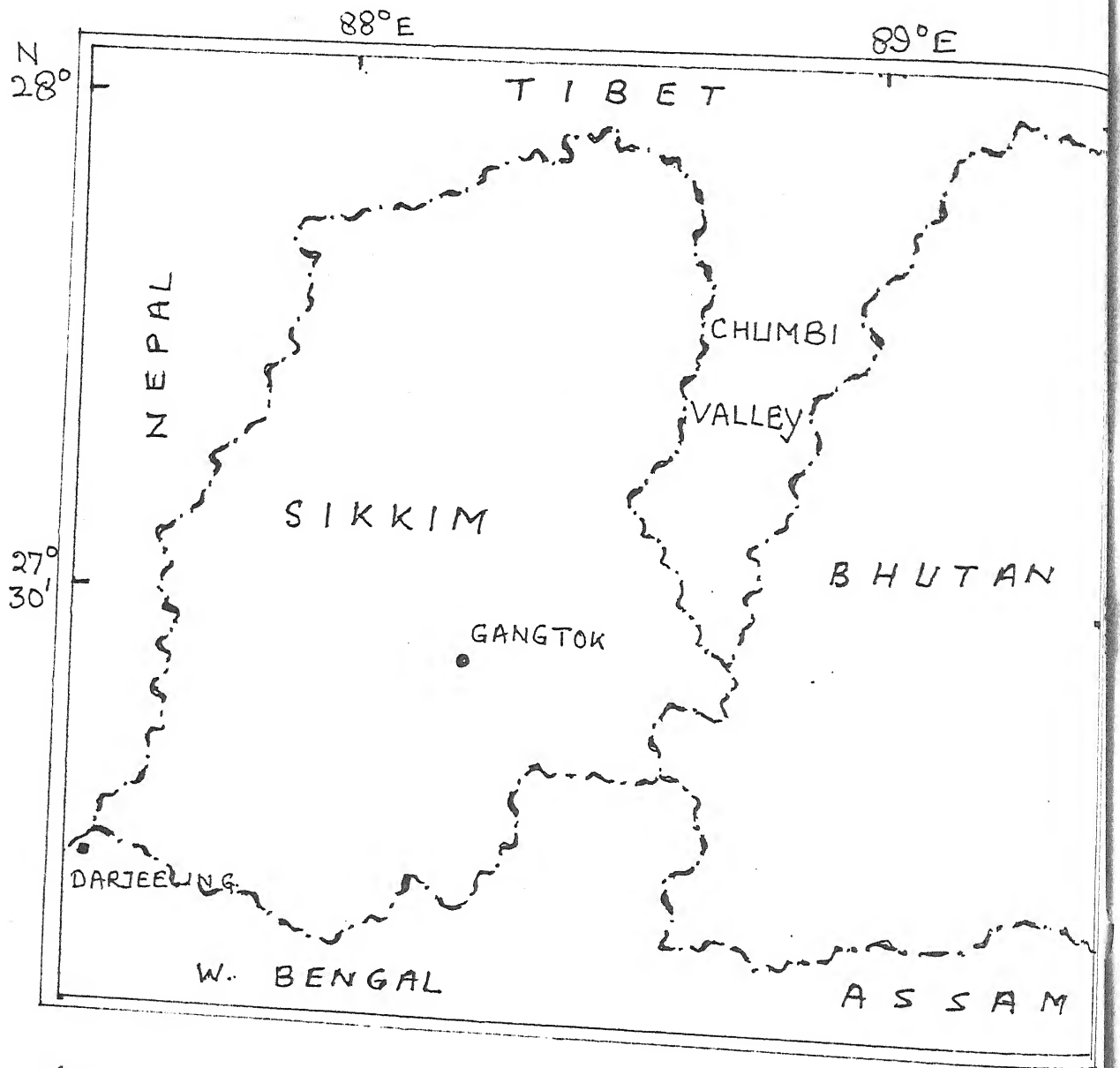
2. Sikkim Govt. and politics: By S K Jha & S N Misra,

The area now occupied by Himalayan kingdoms, (Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal) was the site of a shallow Tethys sea, millions of years ago.¹

After various geological changes, powerful compressive forces folded and thrust marine deposits, which rose out of water in the form of huge and complex land mass. The denudational and erosional process gradually converted this land mass into mountains and valleys.

This mountain mass is the most inaccessible area in the world today. From geographical point of view, these mountain ranges can be divided into Greater Himalay, Inner Himalaya and Foot Hills. All the above three divisions are found in Sikkim. Greater Himalayas is adjacent to the plateau of Tibet. Here the peaks rise about 28,000' and for much of the 700 miles of the northern border, the mountain's average height is more than 20,000' above

1. The Himalayan Kingdoms: Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal:



Geographical Setting of Sikkim

sea level. Formidable mountains have restricted the development of large scale trade and commerce since ancient time but a limited trade flowed through high passes. The Great Himalayan region is dissected into a series of north, south mountain blocs by Manas, Amo, Tista, Kosi, Gundak and Karnali river systems. The valleys of these rivers and their tributaries are occupied by small clustered settlements. Extremely cold winters and short growing seasons are distinctive features in this region, hence the farming in high Himalaya is limited to one crop a year.

Inner Himalayas is a complex area covered with forest, intercepted by fertile valleys. Though the mountains are not as formidable as in the Greater Himalayas, but they have also separated the fertile valleys of the kingdom from the gangetic plains of India and the plateau of Tibet. This region is moderately populated except for paro and Gangtok.

In the Inner Himalayan region the intervening mountain ranges have compartmentalized the populated valleys. Although the natural drainage lines are in the north-south, the numerous gorges and rugged mountains make travel in any direction difficult.

The third region or the foot hills forms the densely cultivated belt.

The entire state, including the Darjeeling hills, is a closed basin between two parallel and deeply intersected transverse ridges. Donkya La and Singalila, about ninety miles long. The general trend of the mountain system is from the east to the west, but the chief ridges, the Donkya La and Singalila run from the north to the south. The hills rise from the plains of North Bengal. The altitude of the country varies from 5,700 feet at Gangtok in Eastern Sikkim to 12,300 feet at Gnatong in the North. The permanent snow line is approximately at 16,000 feet.

The mountain girdled basin of Sikkim is the catchment area of the headwaters of the Tista river

and its affluents like Lachung Chu, the Lachen Chu, the Zenu Chu, the Talung Chu, the Rangpo and the Ranjit.¹

Sikkim has typical mountain climate, an increase by a few feet in altitude affects temperature and rainfall conditions. Upto an altitude of 3,500 feet above sea level, rainfall is heavy and temperature relatively high. The climate is tropical and there are thick tropical forests. Out of 7096 Sq.Kms. of total area of Sikkim, 5450 Sq.Kms. is covered with forest.² Four thousand nine hundred and fifty Sq.Kms. of the forest is in the possession of the Government, four hundred Sq. Kms. is owned by Monastries, and the remaining hundred Sq. Kms. is unclassified.³

The temperate zone extends between 3,500 feet and 12,000 to 16,000 feet. Beyond that it is perpetual

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1. Himalayan Boderland - Ram Rahul: Vikas Publications.
 2. Statistical Pocket Book - Sikkim - 1981, published by Bureau of Economic and Statistics, Planning and Development Department, Government of Sikkim: p.43
 3. Statistical Pocket Book - Sikkim, 1981 - P.43

snow. The onset of the monsoon in the month of the May coincides with the southward shift of the inter-tropical convergence. Moisture laden winds from the Bay of Bengal, after discharging moisture in the Assam Himalayas, travel westward and become the main source of precipitation in Sikkim.

Kanchenjunga, with all its rich forest reserve, and splendid beauty, becomes very dangerous, when the thick snow mass (often hundred feet thick) under the pull of gravity move downwards in the form of glaciers or tumble over in great avalanches. Even in the places of comparative security the almost continuous creaking and groaning of the moving ice, and the roar of avalanches combine to create a sense of instability and apprehension.

LAND LOCKISM:

Land Lockism is a geographical term used for a state which has no out-let to the sea or no coastal lining. These states have more than one neighbours, hence sometimes they are called perforated states. There are many such states in Asia, e.g. - Afganistan, Bhutan, Laos, Outer Mangolia, Sikkim etc.

Oceans play a very important role in a country's life. They are highways of commerce as well as channels for the deployment of troops and submarines for offensive and defensive wars.¹ Any power controlling the sea lanes, the strategic straits, narrow gulfs and bays and the adjacent coastlands, can confine the Continental Powers to land denying them access to the sea. Secondly the ocean floor, hitherto valued only for its fish and salt or pearls, is now known to be immensely rich in petroleum, natural gas, manganese, silver, zinc, lead, tin, nickle, chromite and a variety of other minerals.

1. Some aspects of the Political Geography of India,
V A Janki: P-201.

Many battles have been fought in the past to acquire monopoly on the sea routes e.g. it was not the act of revenge to retrieve his father's honour that lead Alexander of Macedon to wage a war against Darius III of Persia between 336 B C and 325 B C, but to subjugate the Fertile Crescent, the link between Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf.¹

Various efforts were made to find solution to this problem. It is felt that this problem can be solved in the following manner:-

1. An international agreement should be sought to get navigable river, traversing both, the land-locked state and the coastal country as free for both just as the high seas.
2. A neutral strip of territory leading to sea coast may be provided through international agreement.
3. The land-locked country may be guaranteed the use of adequate facilities at specified ports and also freedom of transit along a connecting road-way or railway or both.

1. Some aspects of Political Geography of India-
V A Janki: P.203.

Economy of Sikkim suffered before its merger with India, because it had no option to trade freely due to its land-lockism. Sikkim could trade only with Tibet. In the west Bhutan could not provide satisfactory market due to inaccessibility to the region and lack of purchasing capacity. In the south British India was a very strong power to provide any trade concessions on favourable terms to Sikkim. On this account alone it was quite intelligent for Sikkim National Congress to decide merger with India.

EARLY POLITICAL SYSTEM

The early political system of Sikkim was a typically Himalayan theocratic feudalism parallel to the Tibetan Lamaist pattern. In order to understand the gradual development of political institutions in Sikkim, we can broadly divide the evolutionary process into three phases:-

- (i) The pre-theocratic phase

(ii) The Medieval Theocracy.

(iii) The Colonial Feudalism.

(i) Pre Theocratic Phase:-

The original inhabitants of Sikkim i.e. Kiratis (consisting of Limbus, Lepchas and Magars) were ruled by tribal chiefs. Col. Mainwaring reports of a Lepcha Punu (king) Turbe ruling around 1425 A.D. when the Bhutia patriarch, Khy Bhumsa - the ancestor of Phuntsog Namgyal came to Sikkim from Kham province of Tibet.¹ Khy Bhumsa also met the last Lepcha chief Thekong Tek. Thereafter the Lepcha rule came to an end, and the Bhutia rule began in 1642.

During the pre-theocratic phase, a village was the important territorial unit for social and political purposes. Originally some influential village headmen assumed the leadership of their clans. Thereafter headmanship became hereditary.

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : P.12.

To avoid inter-tribal and inter-clan feuds, they used to negotiate polyandrous marriages with Limbus, the Magars, the Bhutias and the Drukpas.

(ii) The Medieval Theocracy:-

In the first half of the 17th Century, Buddhist Lamas of the Red Hat Sect came to Sikkim, in order to propagate their religious tenets. However they began to assert Tibetan influence in Sikkim. They persuaded Phuntsog to rule the country on religious lines with blessings of Dalai Lama. Phuntsog accepted Buddhism and was consecrated the ruler of Sikkim¹ with the blessings of Dalai Lama. He is said to have received ceremonial presents of hat, silken scarf and the sand image of Guru Rimpoche. Consequently the newly established Bhutia principality of Namgyal dynasty was tied to the Tibetan Theocracy.

Phuntsog was a pragmatic ruler. He could well analyse the problems before him. He wanted to win the hearts of Lepchas because the entire land

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha: P.73.

was in the hands of Lepcha Tassos and Kurthaks. Lepchas were not only the sons of the soil, but also better cultivators. Provoking any conflict with them would have affected the Bhutia ruler adversely. He was shrewd enough to adopt a magnificent device for administering the newly acquired state. He divided the state into 12 Dzongs (districts) and appointed 12 Lepcha Dzongpans, one for each district.¹ He also formed a council in which people from various tribes were included.

The political structure of the theocratic Sikkim combined three distinct segments, the clergy, the aristocracy and the commoners. The monks were drawn from the high born Bhutias and Lepchas. Monasteries were working as administrative centres. Revenue was accepted in kind, so these monasteries worked as store houses. All the expenses of the monasteries were met from the state Exchequer. Clergymen had to perform temporal as well as secular duties. They were trained as painters, calligraphers,

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : P.74

embroiders, carvers and skilled craftsmen.

The rulers were monk-incarnates, constantly in communion with high Lamas of Tibet and Deb Raja of Bhutan. Monks were used as emissaries, mediators and settlers of various state affairs. In internal administration also, the monks held important positions. They were appointed to state councils, managed monastery estates, administered justice, and even helped the laity in fighting against the enemies. They were influential both in the court and the public life. In fact it was these clergymen who managed the affairs of the state in collaboration with Kazis. The Kazis were the regional lords and as such were in charges of their territories. The Kazis and officials enjoyed a limited authority (over specific tracts of land) but the final authority was always with the king in all matters of importance.

Besides exercising some authority, adjudicating minor disputes, and referring to the ruler things of moment, an official also assessed, the revenue payable by all the people settled on the land within his jurisdiction, paid over to the

ruler a certain fixed contribution and kept the greater portion for himself.

Kazis had no proprietary rights in the land, although they did have a kind of hereditary title to their office.¹ The Kazis were a fluid social class in which inter-marriage with the ruler's family was practised. Sometimes these Kazis were stronger than the kings.

(iii) THE COLONIAL FEUDALISM:

By 1850 the British started exerting their influence on the social, political and economic life of Sikkim.

In 1888 John Claude White was appointed the first political officer of Sikkim by the Government of British India to reduce the Tibetan influence.²

Claude White recast the very structure of administration. As the rulers used to live near Chumbi Valley, they were virtually out of touch with

1. Bulletin of Tibetology: Vol. III, No.2, 1966: P.48

2. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha. P-19.

the day today administration. White took advantage of situation and appointed an advisory council, consisting of four Kazis, two Lamas and two ex-Dewans. He abolished all tenancy regulation systems of land tenure. He gave the entire arable land, except the ruler's estate on contractual lease for a specific period on a fixed annual rent. It may be mentioned that according to the state revenue roll, there were three classes of illakas (areas) - viz. (1) Leased out illakas, (2) Illakas under direct management of state, and (3) Monastries.¹ For raising the state's revenue and strengthening the British position, he alongwith some Lepcha Kazis, encouraged the Nepalese to settle down in Sikkim. He initiated a plan for opening up tracks through densely forested hills, for bringing people from various parts of Sikkim, nearer to one another and administering to them a uniform law. He carried out many social reforms and implemented welfare schemes. He was instrumental in introducing apple-growing cloth-weaving, carpet-manufacture and copper-mining.

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : Page-23.

The introduction of lessee system was an event of great socio-political significance. The pattern of socio-political structure built by White remained, till 1947, i.e. till the end of British rule in India, the Corner Stone of administrative policy.

With India's independence starts a new phase in Sikkim's political life, i.e. transition to modernity, which will be discussed in Chapter IV.

C H A P T E R I I

SIKKIM-TIBET RELATIONS

Tibet is a plateau of the size of Western Europe in the heart of Asia. It is encircled by the Earth's highest mountains: The Himalayas in the south, the Karakoram in the west, the Kunlun, Minshun in the north and Ta-hsuch Shan in the east.¹

Tibet's seven million people descended from nomadic tribes, racially akin to Mongols, according to their legends, their land lay beneath the shallow sea. In the south of Tibet lies Sikkim the 22nd state of Indian Union.

Sikkim and Tibet are very closely linked socially, politically, culturally and religiously. Sikkim's Bhutia population originally came from Tibet in the beginning as traders, who were followed by religious preachers and peasants.

According to a legend heirs of king Indra Bodhi (Raja of Himachal Pradesh) migrated to Kham province of Tibet and founded Minayak dynasty. As has already been explained in Chapter I, Khy Bhumsa,

1. In Exile From the Land of Snows: John F Avedon: P.12

a prince of this dynasty, 25th in lineage, came to Sikkim on pilgrimage, and settled down at Phari after marrying the daughter of Sakya hierarch. Four chief clans of Sikkim owe their origin to four sons of Khy Bhumsa. Guru Tashi, the fourth son of Khy Bhumsa, became the chief of the local people and adopted the native culture. He can be said to be the first ruler of Sikkim, called Chogyals. Chogyals often married Tibetan beauties; and spend most of the time in Tibet.¹ Tibet not only exercised great influence on the administration of Sikkim but provided protection whenever the need arose.

Tibet came to the rescue of Sikkim during various, Gorkha invasions. In 1773 Sikkim was attacked by Prithi Narain Shah of Nepal, who occupied territories west of Tista river. In 1787, Sikkim was again attacked by Gorkhas. With the help of Tibet Sikkim's forces penetrated deep inside Nepal. In 1788 under General Johar Singh, Sikkim was attacked by Gorkha forces. The attack was so forceful, that within no time, Sikkim's capital Rabdantse collapsed.

1. Gazetteer of Sikkim: P.4

The Chogyal and Gyalmo had to take shelter at Lhasa, in Tibet. In 1791 the Gorkha invasion of Sikkim was beaten back with the help of Tibetan forces.¹ Sikkim's ties with Tibet were so strong, that Phuntsog II took refuge in Tibet in 1773, when his succession was challenged by Changzod Tamding. Tibet provided full protection to Phuntsog II and appointed a regent, who virtually ruled Sikkim for five years.

The tradition of appointing Tibetan Councillors initiated by Phuntsog I was carried on by his successors.²

Monasteries, the nucleus of Sikkim's social, cultural and political activities were working under considerable influence of Tibetan monasteries.

Sikkim's relations with Tibet were very strong. When the Botanists Hooker and Campbell trespassed the boundary and entered Tibet, the Tibetan authorities, greatly resented it and the Chogyal was compelled to arrest Campbell and Hooker for which Chogyal had to pay a heavy price later on.³

1. Sikkim - The story of Integration : S R Shukla: p.18

2. Gazetteer of Sikkim.p.

3. P R Rao - India and Sikkim: P.26

However, the prisoners were released soon after, as Sikkim was afraid of the might of British rulers. The British government was so much annoyed at it that it marched its army into Sikkim and annexed Morung. The result was that Darjeeling which was so far an enclave in the Sikkim territory, became contiguous with the British districts of Purnea and Rangpur in the plains, The Sikkim Raja was cut off from access to the plains except through British territory.

Annexation of Morung in 1849¹ brought drastic changes in the Sikkim-Tibet, Sikkim-India and Indo-Tibet relations. Sikkim became very much suspicious of the British India's moves. While attacking Sikkim, Britain had at one time, decided to annex the whole of Sikkim but refrained from doing so, because of a very strong pro-Tibetan faction under Deewan * Namguay, present in Sikkim. The real power was not in the hands of Chogyal but in those of the Deewan. Tibet did not intervene directly during the 1849 crisis but granted to Chogyal an allowance when Britain

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao- P.27.

* Ibid.

stopped his Darjeeling grant. This gesture increased the Tibetan influence so much that in the next decade, the Government of India was forced to undertake another military expedition into Sikkim to re-establish its position.¹

Sikkim was brought under the effective control of British Government in 1890. But certain boundary problems still plagued the British Government. As Tibetans were not a party to 1890 convention, they used to cross the boundary on and off, and even built a post near Giagong in the Northern Sikkim. The British authorities wrote about this to the Chinese Amban (China's representative in Tibet) at Lhasa and pleaded for the demarcation of the Sikkim-Tibet boundary. Amban agreed to demarcate the boundary under the joint supervision of Chinese and British officials. However, when the British official Claude White reached on the spot for the demarcation, he could not find any Tibetan representative there. As a reaction the British Government sent a military expedition upto Lhasa and a con-

1. India and Sikkim: P R Rao : P.31.

vention was signed between Colonel Young Husband and the chinese Amban on the 7th Sept. 1904 at Po-tala Palace. This convention is known as Lhasa convention and is quite important for understanding the relationship between British India, Sikkim and Tibet. The nine articles of the convention run as follows:-¹

- (1) No portion of Tibetan territory shall be ceded sold, leased or mortgaged or otherwise given for occupation to any European power.
- (2) No such power shall be permitted to intervene in Tibetan affairs.
- (3) No representative or agent of any foreign power shall be admitted to Tibet.
- (4) No concession for Railway, roads, Telegraphs, mining or other rights shall be granted to any foreign power.
- (5) No Tibetan revenue received in kind or cash shall be pledged or assigned to any foreign power or to the subject of any foreign power.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.141.

The boundary between Tibet and Sikkim, as determined in the convention of 1890, was a recognized by Tibet.

The convention clearly defined Sikkim as the protectorate of British India.

Later this convention was approved by China in the Peking Convention signed at Peking on April, 7th, 1906.

IMPACT OF BRITISH INDIA'S POLICY

ON

SIKKIM-TIBET RELATIONS

India's relations with Sikkim cannot be understood, without taking the Tibetan factor into account, which is involved in it. Sikkim has been a land of common interest for both India and Tibet. As has already been explained in the previous chapter; Sikkim was a feudatory of Tibet, and there is a long history of social, cultural, and religious ties between them. Tibet wanted to maintain the status-quo, while the defense strategy and trade requirements of British India demanded the control of Sikkim to keep it as a buffer

state between India and China in the same way as Afghanistan was between India and Russia. It is mentioned in the Gazetteer of Sikkim that it was impossible for the Government of India to ignore Sikkim as it was ignoring Bhutan, nor could it be treated at par with Nepal, because Sikkim's strategic location was different from Nepal. Sikkim's location was such that, it would have been thrust into the fold either of Tibet or of Nepal, sooner or later.

Both the British and the Chinese empires enforced a string of small states which provided both, a buffer zone and a natural arena of Imperial Competition. When British reached this area, these states, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan were all in varying degrees in dependence upon or in allegiance to China.¹

Maxwell writes such Tibetan and hence indirectly Chinese hegemony over Cis-Himalayan states, as a potential danger to their own position. The object of the British policy was the reversal of this allegiance of the Himalayan states, which was

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : Page-41.

achieved de-facto so far as Nepal was concerned, and in form as well, in case of Bhutan and Sikkim.¹

We may now discuss how various attempts were made by India to keep Sikkim under their exclusive control, and how Tibet created obstacles in achieving this goal.

In 1817 British India signed treaty of Titalia with Sikkim, which virtually brought Sikkim under the influence of East India Company for the first time. The Company acquired a clearly defined right to Trade upto Tibetan frontier. Initially Sikkim was needed for defense, later it was found that growing production of tea in British territory has got a good market in Tibet. Sikkim provided a more ready communication with Lhasa and China than through Bhutan. Lord Moira considers the treaty of Titalia as a diplomatic triumph which could never have been imposed by force of arms from the extreme difficulty of the country.²

1. India's China War - Maxwell: P.37

2. India and Sikkim - P R Rao : P.4

Trade considerations weighed heavily with the Government of India in its policy towards Sikkim and Tibet. Jackson of the Bengal Civil Service in his report on trade argued that Sikkim route could be of considerable importance. Similarly Hodgson the former British Resident of Kathmandu and Campbell (Superintendent of Darjeeling in West Bengal) became ardent champions of the Tibetan trade via Sikkim. Therefore for capturing Tibetan market, acquisition of Sikkim route was a primary consideration. The British Government wanted to control the route through diplomatic channels, not by use of force. Sikkim was a weak state militarily, and could have been annexed by mighty British empire, but Sikkim being feudatory of Tibet, use of force against Sikkim would have antagonised China. British Government did not want to enter into any conflict with China, as it would have required British Indian Government to waste all that energy which was required to keep Russians away from reaching the boundary of India. Therefore British India adopted the policy of negotiations, which

resulted in the treaty of Titalia in 1817, and in 1861 treaty of Tumlong was signed between British India and Sikkim. These treaties strengthened British position in Sikkim and improved trade prospects with Tibet. Writing about the importance of the treaty Eden wrote - "a very considerable trade will spring up between Lhasa and Darjeeling. The Tibetans will be only too glad to exchange gold dust, musk borax wool and salt for English cloth, tobacco, drill etc. and the people of Sikkim will gain as carriers of this trade and their government will raise considerable revenue from transit duties." ¹

With the conversion of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim into protectorates of British Indian Government, it was thought, that the boundary of British India would be quite safe at Himalayan foothills. Britain was quite confident that her influence over those states, was quite sufficient to exclude rival powers from approaching the plains

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.44

of India. India's northern borders could have been guarded by these obedient feudatories more securely and cheaply than it could have been done by the British Indian Government itself.

After strengthening the position in Himalayan borderlands, British government then decided to create influence on Tibet also, to facilitate the trade between Darjeeling and Tibet as well as to keep it as buffer state between China and India.

In the first decade of the twentieth century British India attempted to establish its exclusive influence over Tibet. Lord Curzon believed that Russia's passion for a pan-Asiatic dominion was now focussed on Tibet. It can be thwarted by making Tibet a buffer state.

This policy succeeded in so far as the Russian influence was kept out of Tibet, but Curzon failed in his objective of bringing Tibet, under some measure of protection from India. So the re-assertion of the Chinese authority there became inevitable as soon as a strong central government

was established in Peking. This would ultimately have affected Indo-Sikkim relations. British interest in Tibet was not a new development. The stupendous development of tea industry in Darjeeling enhanced this interest. As early as 1772, Warren Hastings, the Governor General of India had send George Bogle to Shigatse the headquarter of P_anchen Lama to make an attempt to open Tibet for the British trade. Bogle could not achieve any success during that visit due to the suspicion of Tibetan Government at Lhasa. The second attempt was made in 1782 by Turner, though he was favourably received but he could not open up trade relations with Tibet. The third attempt also proved a failure. So after these constant failures to have direct contact with Tibet,¹ Britain thought of influencing the border states of Tibet i.e. Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal.

In 1869 Colonel J C Haughton advised the Government of India to cultivate friendship with Tibet and open communications, but this proposal

1. The Tibetan Frontiers Question: F A Greenhut II, P-19.

was rejected by the British Government of India on the ground that it could excite suspicion to our motives and do more harm than good because relations between India and Tibet were quite satisfactory at that time. In the words of Sir William Orey, the Lt. Governor of Bengal -

"These relations (Between India and Tibet) are at present so satisfactory that the government of that country (Tibet) have always, it is believed, declined to take any action in matters relating to frontier politics when applied to for its interference by its two quasi feudatories, Sikkim and Bhutan, for the fear that by so doing, it should be brought into collision with the British Government. Their reply to the applications of these frontier states has always been that so long as the British Government does not attempt to interfere with the frontiers of Tibet proper they have no desire to intervene."¹

But ultimately Haughton's proposal was supported by the Secretary of State, Duke of Argyll. Hence a letter was sent to Dzongpen of Phari, a Tibetan

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : Page-50.

official, through Sidkeong Namgyal, the Maharaja of Sikkim. Dzongpen refused to receive the letter on the ground that it was contrary to the policy of his Government, which had prohibited all communications with the Government of India.

The Government of India then wrote to Wade, British minister in China, to seek Chinese permission to open trade with Tibet. Wade replied in the negative, and asked the Government of India to wait for a proper opportunity. While the Government of India was trying its best to open trade with Tibet, a movement was launched in Britain itself by the mercantile community to open trade with Tibet. The memorandum asked the Government of India to -

1. Complete Darjeeling - Calcutta Railway line.
2. Establish a mart on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier,
- and 3. Open counsellor agencies at Lhasa & Shigatse.¹

Apart from the Tibetan and Chinese opposition, the chief obstacle in developing trade with Tibet was the lack of road and transport on the Sikkim route, and frequent stoppages of trade by Tibetan officials at the Sikkim-Tibet border. Hence the Government of

India felt that something should be done to check Tibetan officials, acting on the Sikkim-Tibet border. The Government of India got an opportunity when Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal visited Darjeeling in connection with his allowances. The Government of India kept before him three proposals.

1. He should give assistance to the British officer like Edgar and others when they visit Sikkim.
2. He should help the British in opening and developing trade with Tibet.
3. He should keep the government of India informed of all the happenings beyond his northern frontiers.

On his visit to Sikkim-Tibet frontier John Edgar met Ex-Dewan Namguay (who was prohibited to enter Sikkim under treaty of 1861). He received valuable information from Namguay regarding the actual position in Tibet. Edgar could not enter Chumbi valley as Dzongpen of Phari asked him to take permission from China, as Tibet is treaty bound with China not to permit any European to enter Tibet. Here it may be mentioned that

in 1835 when the British botanist Hooker and Dr. Campbell crossed over into Sikkim, they were arrested by the order of the Chogyal. Chogyal being Bhutia was emotionally inclined to Tibet, and a very powerful pro-Tibetan, factor under Dewan Namguay was active in Sikkim's politics. King Tsugphud Namgyal became old and retired to Chumbi valley, Namguay became the virtual ruler of Sikkim and started causing troubles to the British, by demanding compensation for Darjeeling, and frequently kidnapping persons from British territories and plundering the properties of the British subjects. Namguay^{*} informed Edgar that there had been in Tibet a move in favour of abandoning the policy of isolation,¹ (getting away from China) ~~he~~ however, told Edgar that it would take a long time to witness any change of policy in Tibet and advised him to move to Peking to get the obstacles removed. On knowing Edgar's proposed visit to Tibet via Sikkim

* Namguay after his expulsion from Sikkim in 1861 received a grant of land from the Dalai Lama and a decoration of "a high class button" from the Amban. In consideration of these favours, he was to give advice on Sikkim affairs to the Dzongpen of Phari during his exile in Tibet Namguay's attitudes towards India changed favourably.

the Chinese Amban wrote to Maharaja of Sikkim (in a form of warning) as follows:-

"Your state of Sikkim borders on Tibet; You know what is in our mind, and what our policy is. You are bound to prevent Peling Sahibs (the British) from crossing the frontier. Yet it is entirely through your action in making the roads for the Sahibs through Sikkim that they are going to make the projected attempt.

If you continue to behave in this manner, it will not be well with you."¹

The letter of the Chinese Amban to Maharaja of Sikkim indicated a change in the Tibetan policy towards Sikkim. Prior to 1861, it took for granted its sovereignty over Sikkim and did not take a serious note of the latter's affairs. This indifference cost Tibet a great deal, as the British had extended their control and established a de facto protectorate over Sikkim by 1861. It was only then that Tibet realized the necessity of re-asserting

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.57

its sovereignty over Sikkim to forestall further British expansion towards the North. The news of Edgar's proposed visit to Sikkim came as an excellent opportunity for Tibet to warn the Maharaja and thereby the British that the latter can not claim any sovereign rights over the former kingdom. The subsequent British relations with Tibet revolved around the de jure status of Sikkim.

On learning the contents of Amban's letter to the Maharaja, Edgar dropped his plan to enter Tibet but explained to Dzongpen of Phari the British Policy towards Himalayan states which he stated as one of "encouragement of trade to the utmost of our power and the maintenance of strong friendly states along the frontier." He pointed out that Tibet was the only country on the frontier which was not maintaining friendly relations with the British by following a policy of isolation in contradistinction to the policy of friendship pursued by Nepal.

Edgar and the Government of Bengal were keen to open trade with Tibet even if they had to take permission of China. But the Government of India thought that seeking Chinese permission meant recognising Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, which the British Government was not willing to do. Edgar's visit strengthened the British position in Sikkim and weakened the Tibetan hold over it. The British position in Sikkim was further strengthened when in 1874 Thotal Namgyal was consecrated as the Chogyal, against the wishes of Tibet.

The British influence in Sikkim declined when Thotab Namgyal married a Tibetan beauty in 1880. A British official visiting Tibet in the guise of Buddhist scholar was arrested (though he escaped) and trade at Sikkim-Tibet border was stopped by Tibet. Tibet tried to exert its influence by giving presents to the whole of Chogyals entourage during his visit to Tibet in 1883. Colman McCaulay wanted by every means to go to Tibet via Sikkim for commercial and political gains. But the mission had to be abandoned

due to the strong opposition of Tibetans as they never wanted any foreigner to come to their land to spoil their culture and religion. Moreover, during 1885-86, British India was faced with the problem of expansionist Russia, which was advancing towards Afghanistan with a giant stride. For that friendly relations with China, was a must. The British government had also occupied upper Burma, which occupation the British wanted China to recognise. So events in Burma and Afghanistan were the two factors which necessitated the friendship of China. The Tibetan question was left for the time being.

No sooner the McCaulay mission was abandoned than the news came of the Tibetan advance by thirteen miles into northern Sikkim across Jelep Pass. Tibet had occupied a place called Lingtu on the Darjeeling road.¹ The Government of India thought that Tibet had taken such a step due to the fear of McCaulay mission. The British Government hoped that

1. The Gazetteer of Sikkim : VII

Tibet withdraw. However, if Tibet did not withdraw, it could have an adverse effect on the Himalayan states. Therefore they very much wanted to get the aggression vacated, Since the use of force could have made the situation worse with China. Chogyal supported action of Tibet, by proclaiming that, the land in occupation belongs to Tibet. Tibetan built up a fort there. Maharaja's action was not surprising as he was half Tibetan and his wife was pure Tibetan. Moreover there was a secret treaty between Maharaja and Tibet in 1886 (at Gating in Tibet). The treaty was in the form of petition from Maharaja in which he ran as follows:-¹

"From time of Panchu Namgyal (the first Raja of Sikkim) all our Rajas and other subjects have obeyed the orders of China. You have ordered us by strategy or force to stop the passage.....between Sikkim and British territory but we are small and Sarkar (British Government) is great and we may not succeed, and then fall into the mouth of tiger-lion. In such

1.. The Gazetteer of Sikkim : p.8

a crisis, if you, as our old friend, can make such arrangements, even then in good and evil we will not leave the shelter of the feet of China and Tibet.....we all, King and subjects, priests and laymen, honestly promise to prevent persons from crossing the boundary.¹

Inspite of repeated request and warning from British Government, neither Tibetan vacated Lingtu nor Maharaja came to Darjeeling to find out the solution of the problem. This was resented by British government and the public pressure was mounting in England as well as in India, as there was a grave danger of loosing a potential market. Political implication of Lingtu incident was also quite unfavourable for British India as Maharaja of Sikkim felt India to be a weak power in comparison to China and Tibet. Ultimately in March, 1888 British Indian Government launched an attack on Lingtu and got it vacated. Two months later Tibetan avenged the defeat by a fresh attack on Sikkim but were repulsed.

1. Gazetteer of Sikkim : P.8.

The defeat of Tibetans resulted in a slight change in the attitude of leaders of the Tibetan faction in Sikkim towards the Government of India. They became more submissive to the British than they formerly were. Attitude of Maharaja towards British Indian Government was not satisfactory. He did not inform the second Tibetan attack on Gnatong to British authorities.

British army finally marched into Sikkim in September, to assert the sovereignty over Sikkim which they successfully did.

The defeat of Tibet also alerted China. It felt that if it did not follow a policy of negotiation with British Government, it might have to face worse consequences, therefore the Chinese authorities informed the British Government that Shen Tai (Amban) was proceeding to Gnatong to begin negotiations. After long and protracted negotiation which was twice dropped and again resumed, a convention was signed in March, 1890. The convention

admitted Government of India's total control over internal and external affairs of Sikkim. Secondly the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet was decided. A joint Anglo-chinese guarantee was provided for Sikkim-Tibet frontiers.

The greatest weakness of the convention was that it was not signed by Tibet, and China declared that it was not in a position to enforce the convention upon Tibet. Tibet did not permit India to trade with it, hence another trade agreement Regulation of Trade, 1983¹ was signed to facilitate pasturage, communications and trade. But even after signing the convention of 1893 trade with Tibet was not facilitated. White demanded that trade mart should be shifted from Yatung to Phari - a place located on the edge of Tibetan plateau, previously White agreed to shift the mart from Yatung to Rinchingong, but now he was adamant for Phari because of two major developments. First was the growth of National Sentiments in Tibet and second was the rumours of Russian interest in Tibet. During the

last decade of 19th century Tibetan Nationalism was accelerated by two events. First was the assumption of power by 13th Dalai Lama and second was defeat of China by Japan in 1895. Dalai Lama in order to free his country from China and save it from British India 13th Dalai Lama turned towards Russia for help.

CURZON'S POLICY:

Curzon was of firm opinion that if India does not assert itself in Tibet. India's security would be in question. It was due to Curzon's Policy. Lhasa convention (1904) and Peking convention (1907) were signed to assert British position in Sikkim and secure trade facilities in Tibet.

Colonel Younghusband expedition in Tibet removed the contingency of Russian influence in Tibet.

The Government of India took over fully the political and administrative charge of Sikkim with effect from 1st April, 1906. Colonel Younghusband expedition forced Tibet to sign Lhasa convention and

solved all the British difficulties regarding the status of Sikkim and its boundary with Tibet. Tibet had not only recognized the protectorate of Government of India over Sikkim but also confirmed the Sikkim-Tibet boundary as laid down in the convention of 1890. China confirmed Lhasa convention by signing Peking convention in 1906.

The influence of these two treaties on Sikkim was far reaching. In the first place the de jure status of Sikkim as Protectorate of India had received international sanction. In the second place, the Government of India by demonstrating its power in Tibet was able to consolidate its position in Sikkim. It no longer had any trouble thereafter with the Maharaja or pro-Tibetan faction which vanished altogether.

From 1906 onwards till British left India, British India Government had no problem with Sikkim.

In 1817, the

IMPACT OF EMERGENCE OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF CHINA ON INDO-SIKKIM RELATIONS

The emergence of China in 1949 as unified and expansionist regime under communist leadership, is most momentous event of the twentieth century, which created world wide impact.

In a quest to become World power Chou-En-Lai made it clear that China's views must be heard on any major international issues.

People's Republic of China immediately after the formation of People's Republic of China (P R C) government, it made her policy towards Himalayan kingdoms quite clear. A map which was published in a book entitled "A Brief History of Modern China", in 1954, claimed all of North East India i.e. Assam, Ladakh, the border states of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim along with some other Asian countries. It was alleged that all the above mentioned land once belonged to Manchu dynasty of China, and were snatched away by Imperialist forces.¹

1. Sikkim and India : Storm & Consolidation : BSK Grover:
P-146.

The first step towards the fulfillment of ambitious plan was the Seizure of Tibet.

Mao-Tse-Tung proclaimed -

"Tibet is an integral part of Chinese territory, and the problem of Tibet is entirely domestic problem of China. The Chinese People's Liberation army must enter Tibet, liberate Tibetan people and defend the frontiers of China. This is the resolved policy of the Chinese People's Government." ¹

So far Himalayan border states were living in peace, as a protectorate of India, but Seizure of Tibet created a new problem. A mass meeting was held in Lhasa. In this meeting in July, 1959 China's General Chang-Kua-Juo said, "Bhutanese, Sikkimese, Ladhakhis were part of Chinese territory in the past and were bound to return to Chinese Motherland. China would give them, unconditional economic aid, that India had inherited and was preserving a vestige of British Imperialism by retaining Sikkim as

1. India & China - Sudhakar Bhat. P.10.

a protectorate and exercising responsibility for the foreign office of Bhutan.¹

China's propoganda media claimed, that Tibet is China's palm and Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh and Arunanchal Pradesh are five fingers.²

Sometimes these Himalayan border states were described in Chinese publicity media as four teeth with which Chinese will grind their way to southern seas.

While Chinese propoganda media clearly indicated Chinese future policy towards Himalayan states but in diplomatic considerations, Chinese Government did not make her position clear.

When India became free, People's Republic of China recognized the convention of 1890, which delineated the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet.³

1. India China Relations : P C Chakravarti: P.163

2. Times of India : August 29, 1959.

3. India China Relations : P C Chakravarti: P.163

When Pandit Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, during his visit to Sikkim and Bhutan, passed through Nathu La, in 1953, was received by Chinese officials and a tablet with the legend. Sikkim-Tibet border was put at the place where 1895 demarcation line was crossed. The Chinese Prime Minister Chou-En-Lai addressing a Press conference at New Delhi on 25th April, 1960 stated that "China respects India's relationship with Bhutan and Sikkim". But the Peking Review - a publication of the Government of China amended the statement of Chou-En-Lai by adding the adjective 'proper' before 'relations', evidently that superfluous adjective was used to indicate that China did not recognize India's responsibility for the defense of Sikkim.

Since Chinese authorities have always been careful to use the term 'proper' in referring to India's relations with border states. Whenever Government of India tried to talk to China to recognize her treaty rights in Sikkim and Bhutan China always avoided it carefully.¹

1. China's Foreign Policy - V P Dutta: P.227.

The relative geographical position of India and China is such, that any army in occupation of Tibet has immense superiority and tactical advantages, over an army struggling in the rain soaked, deeply cut and continually ascending terrain in south of the Himalayan range.¹ Military superiority coupled with the population superiority of China posed a great threat to India. Just as an independent Mongolia has made a large stretch of the Russian frontier safe from Chinese attack, an independent Tibet could make the Himalayan Kingdoms and the northern Indian frontiers safe from China.² Himalayan kingdoms of Sikkim (now 22nd state of India) stands exposed to an unprincipled and deceptive China. It was but natural for India to get suspicious at the invasion of Tibet by China. The most important consequence of the Seizure of Tibet by China is that the whole Himalayan Frontier so far dead has become alive, and there is a real possibility of danger. In past Indian rulers were not bothered about political happenings in Tibet as it was inhabited by

1. Chinese Betrayal - B N Mullick : P-618.

2. Chinese Betrayal - B N Mullick : P-618.

peace loving Buddhist community. But as soon as Tibet came in China's possession, the People's Liberation Army hurried to consolidate its position for an eventual strike on India. A move Peking viewed as essential to it, to assert military superiority and thereby political dominance over central Asia. The object was accomplished exclusively with forced Tibetan labour, a net work of roads was created linking the People's Liberation Army's three forward headquarters, i.e. - Chando, Shigatse and Rhenock.¹

On New Years day in 1950 three months after the creation of People's Republic of China Radio, Peking announced to its people and the world that "The tasks for People's Liberation Army for 1950 are to liberate Taiwan, Hainan and Tibet."² A series of Broadcast from Xining and Chengdu Capital of Sichuan, followed, each asserting that Tibet was an

1. In Exile from the Land of Snows: John F Avedon, P-266.

2. In Exile from the Land of Snows: John F Avedon, P-26

integral part of Chinese territory. Tibet has fallen under the influence of foreign imperialists., as a result it required 'Liberation' to "secure China's Western borders.¹

The brief civil War of late forties left Tibet profoundly demoralized. It was not until July 1949 that the Tibetan government realised the extent of the Chinese infiltration. Then it was afraid that the newly victorious regime communist China would take advantage of Tibet's weakness. So Tibetan Government closed the Chinese Liason office.² and expelled its staff alongwith its known agents and their Tibetan accomplices. But this action of Tibetan Government could not extinguish the irredentist claim of China over Tibet.

Diplomatic expectations were not so sanguine. Aware that there was a possibility of lasting self defence against China. The Tibetan government telegraphed India, Nepal, U.K. and U.S.A. requesting them

1. In Exile from the Land of Snows : John F Avedon;
P-26.

2. India's China War : Neville Maxwell : P.68.

to receive missions, seeking support. Lacking official relations with all but India because Tibet had never deemed it necessary to have ties with the world. it received polite but negative replies.

India for whom Tibet served as a vital buffer state proved the greatest disappointment. Pt. Nehru asked Dalai Lama to go for a compromise. According to the terms of Simla Agreement (1914) Pt. Nehru was required to deny Chinese suzerainty over Tibet until China itself acknowledged Tibet's strictly defined autonomy. Instead he repeatedly spoke of the sovereignty though vague and 'shadowy' thereby signalling Peking that India's new Government would not come to the aid of Tibet as its British predecessors did. On hearing about Tibet's request, China warned New Delhi, that receiving "an illegal deligation" would be tantamount to entertaining hostile intentions against the Chinese People's Republic. A few months later China assured Indian Ambassador in Peking that China had no intention of using force against Tibet. Thereafter Nehru encouraged Lhasa to negotiate alone on the basis of

Simla Convention. On advice tendered by India. Tibet send a delegation to Peking to secure assurance from Peking that territorial integrity of Tibet would not be violated. Only a few days after the May day celebration in 1950 people's Liberation Army of China launched a probing attack on Tibet.

The foremost objective of China in invading Tibet was strategic. Since the days of invasion a millennia and half before, all Chinese government had looked warily towards their western border. The Communist Government was fearful of losing its newly acquired hold on the country, and saw in the 1904, British incursion to Lhasa with its resulting ties, the basis of the new threat. Despite New Delhi's apparent refusal to fulfil the terms of Simla Convention, the spirit of which clearly placed it as a broker in relations between China and Tibet, Peking was convinced of an 'Imperialist' menace in the west. China desired to shut its back door permanently by annexing Tibet.

There was one main advantage to China. With the possession of the Tibetan plateau the People's Republic stood at the apex of the Orient. In the event of a conflict with either of Asia's other giants India and Soviet Union, Tibet, as the central and the highest ground would prove invaluable platform from which to launch an assault. Economically, the outlook was no less inviting. Tibet was known in Chinese, as Xizang or "The Western treasure house". Tibet possessed everything China lacked; vast unpopulated tract of land, and mineral, forest and animal reserves, virtually unexploited. Politically still in the first ideological flush of victory, the Chinese Communist Party felt mandated to liberate all the oppressed people. It provided a historical justification for absorbing not only Tibet but fifty-three other so called minority, nationalities also; occupying 60% of Chinese territory, but comprising only 6% of the People's Republic's population. It was the CCP's ultimate aim thru its long held Minorities'

Policy to bring the disparate groups, despite talk of regional autonomy". both politically and culturally into the Man mould, and it was this policy which both the Dalai Lama and the vast entourage accompanying him found most daunting.¹

Tenzing Gytso (Fourteenth Dalai Lama) visited India via Sikkim where he was accorded a warm welcome in 1956. During his visit Tenzing Gyatso asked Pt. Nehru if he would support Tibetan cause, Nehru flatly refused, saying he must return to Tibet and seek a peaceful compromise with China, as India also wanted to live in peace. Nehru signed the Panch Sheel agreement with China only for living in peaceful coexistence with it, respecting each other's sovereignty and non intervention.

Ginsburg has said about Tibet, 'he who holds Tibet dominates the Himalayan Piredmont; he who dominates the Himalayan Piredmont, threatens the Indian sub-continent, and he who threatens the

1. In Exile from the Lands of Snows: John F Avedon, P.42

Indian sub-continent may well have all of south-East Asia within his reach and with it all of Asia.¹ For nearly a century, the British maintained the security of India from the North by supporting the neutrality of an autonomous Tibetan state. If the British had acknowledged a tenuous form of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, it was entirely for the purpose of thwarting a bigger danger from the Czarist Russia than what a weak China could pose to the Indian frontiers at that time. With the British in a predominantly strong position in Tibet, the other Himalayan states, like Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal continued to remain firmly within the British sphere of influence. Not only the British power in Tibet protected the independent existence of these territories but they in turn provided an effective barrier against the predatory Chinese and kept them away from the heartland of British India.

1. Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullick: P.615.

This balance of power has now been upset consequent upon the seizure of Tibet by the Chinese. The struggle no longer looms over Tibet but has been pushed forward to the South Himalayas i.e. to India's door steps, and at many places within Indian territory. Tibet may or may not be the roof of India. A strong militant and expansionist power entrenched in Tibet is just like a dagger thrust in the Indian heart. The Chinese had used Tibet to strike at India's heart. In their aggression in October, 1962. Tibetan plateau which has served as 'no man's land' between India's and China, and the great Himalayas as rampart to guard India's approaches, have all been upset since the Chinese occupation of Lhasa in 1950-51.

Acharya Kriplani said in 1954, "thus China has demolished a buffer state..... In international politics when a buffer state is abolished by a powerful nation, that nation is considered to have aggressive designs on its neighbours. This observation has been amply proved by the Chinese

invasion of India on Oct. 20, 1962. With Tibet under Chinese occupation, the Government of India has been inevitably filled with a new sense of concern about the long Himalayn frontier. From the North-Eastern tip of Kashmir to Momcha-Burma at the NEFA border with Tibet, India's frontier extends over a distance of over 2000 miles.

That Tibet is so strategically important for the defence of India was realised even by the British regime, and it always managed to exclude any effective Chinese power from Tibet.¹ Now it has become a debatable issue whether India had enough military strength to resist the Chinese invasion of Tibet. But the fact is that the Government of India never challenged the fictitious medieval concept of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. Before it became a question of military strength it was one of clarity of objectives and of timely action

1. India's China War : Neville Maxwell: P.46

to attain them. An adroit mixture of Indian courage and world opinion might have led to the emergence of People's Republic of China of Tibet in place of Tibetan region of People's Republic of China. But by refraining from recognizing Tibet as a sovereign independent state between 1947-49, at a time when neither the Chinese Communists nor the nationalist Chinese could have effectively intervened, India lost the opportunity of bringing Tibet in the form of independent nations and simultaneously of ensuring the existence of a buffer state between herself and China.

Chinese presence in Tibet could have been challenged, as China did not have any historical evidence to prove its suzerainty over Tibet. The Chinese governments were trying since 1911 to assert themselves in Tibet, which had enjoyed de-facto independence for more than thirty years. On the other-hand British influence reached across the Himalayas, and was expressed in Tibet in the presence of permanent British officials in Lhasa, through whom Tibet

could be said to be in quasi-diplomatic relations with Britain. The British also enjoyed the right to maintain small military escort for their trade officers at Yatung and Gyantse, and had set up postal telegraph and even telephone services, linking the main trade centres in southern Tibet with Sikkim.¹

The Indian Government could not imagine the nature and magnitude of the problem of the Himalayan border until it had lost Tibet to the Chinese. India had inherited a fundamental geographical situation which neither the independence of India nor the communist revolution in China had changed. In the traditional British view, the Himalayan range was of strategic value as a defence barrier only, if the Tibetan plateau behind it was kept away from hostile hands. The security of the sub-continent required Tibet as a neutral zone. Independent India inherited all the rights of British India regarding Tibetan government. But independent India did not

1. India's China War : Neville Maxwell : P.62

try to assert itself, which is clear from Sardar Ballabha Bhai Patel's attack on Nehru's Policy in Parliament. Patel charged Pannikar (India's Ambassador to China) of perfidy. He warned that China's move into Tibet "throws into the military pot all frontier and commercial settlements with Tibet, on which we have been functioning and acting during the lost half a century." Accusing Nehru of complacency and vacillation, Patel proposed a fundamental re-appraisal of China policy, including re-deployment of India's forces to guard areas likely to be subject of dispute.¹ But Nehru continued the policy of friendship with China and continued to champion her case in U.N.O.

In repudiating Britain's policy, India also repudiated the requirements of its national security. Instead of emerging from its subordination to foreign domination, India was horrified at the sight of such a mighty power as China, swallowing the handful of Tibetans.

1. Himalayan Blunder : Kuldeep Nayar :

Another effect of Tibet's seizure had been its adverse effect on Sino-Indian relations. While delivering a lecture in Jadavpur University, many years before the actual happenings in Tibet, P C Chakravarti had said, "The key to Sino-Indian relations lies hidden in the soil of Tibet. It is on the rocks of the roof of the world that our friendship with China will flourish or founder." With the seizure of Tibet the entire 25,000 mile long boundary has become controversial. The Chinese viewed India with a deep suspicion on account of her friendly sympathy towards Tibet and its special relations with Sikkim and Bhutan. To counteract India and its influence, the Chinese armies were firmly entrenched on the long frontiers of India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. The validity of the entire Sino-Indian border has been thrown into doubt. The Indian acceptance of the Chinese challenge and its determination to honour the awesome responsibility of manning and defending the long frontiers have slowed down the pace of the economic development of the country.

Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet to India provided China enough ground to cut Tibet to ground. The Chinese took this opportunity to destroy the last vestiges of the Tibetan government, whose roots went deep into the past and whose authority they tried to evade thru the preparatory committee, Tibetan religion was destroyed systematically. Monasteries were desecrated, defiled, looted and old Abbots, Lamas and monks were jailed and killed.¹ The principle of Panchsheel evaporated.

The subjection of Tibet by China not only threatened the existence of Sikkim but affected cultural inter-course among the nations of the Himalayas belt also. Sikkim, nestling in the north-eastern slopes of Himalayas was once the meeting ground for the different streams of Asian culture. It was thru this place that some of the learned scholars of the old, passed, carrying the message of

1. In Exile from the Land of Snows: John F Avedon.

Lord Buddha to Tibet, Central Asia and China. It was thru Sikkim that saints and scholars from Tibet travelled to the great centres of religion and learning in India like Sarnath, Nalanda and Varanasi. Since the seizure of Tibet, the Chincese have turned the famous passes of Sikkim-Tibet border, thru which these scholars travelled, into military posts, and ancient sacred Buddhist monastries into regional army centres. It is perhaps a sad irony that this small kingdom of Sikkim, which was once an economic and cultural bridge linking India and Tibet should now have become the base of opposing armies of the two countries, India and China, on account of the presence of a militant and expansionist China in Tibet.

IDEA OF HIMALAYAN FEDERATION

From the speeches delivered in Indian Parliament it is evident that Chinese were planning to incorporate Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim etc. into a federal state.¹

1. India and China : S. Bhat : P.10.

China succeeded to some extent in her policy, when the leaders of these Himalayan states started thinking on these lines. Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim and his cousin Jigme Derji (the then P.M. of Bhutan) consulted with Nepalese leaders about forming a federation as mentioned above.¹ The concept of Pan Himalayan federation embracing Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim has articulate advocates in Nepal, who sees such a federation as a means of creating greater Nepal. The existence of Nepalese immigrants in Bhutan and Sikkim gives some reality to the scheme.²

It is significant to note that Peking sees Nepal as cat's paw with which to create such a federation and by so doing weaken Sikkim's and Bhutan treaty ties with India. It will facilitate the spread of Chinese influence by subversion and politican penetration and encourage anti Indian parochial tendencies throughout the frontier areas. In the wake of Chinese attack in 1962, the necessity of economic and social

1. Enchanted Frontiers, Sikkim, Bhutan and India, North Eastern Border: Nari Rustomji.

2. A History of Sino-Indian states relations Hostile coexistence: John Rowland : P.75

transformation of Sikkim have attracted the attention of Government of India in last two decades.

SIKKIM AND SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE:

Sino Indian border dispute had a significant impact upon India's relations with Sikkim and the other Himalayan kingdoms. The Chinese invasion has brought into sharp focus the question of future of Sikkim. In the hostile maneuver of 1962 China demonstrated her apparent intention of gaining mastery over the approaches to North Eastern India and to establish herself as the dominant political power of Asia.

In fact China's national interest collided with India's in Sikkim and Bhutan where she adopted hostile postures. Since the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950 the most dangerous spot has been the Chumbi valley "a danger like slice" of Tibetan territory between Sikkim and Bhutan. In all out possible was against India, the Chinese could strive to strike southward from Chumbi valley. In that exigency an advance of less than 80 miles could sever a vital Indian land corridor chopping off Sikkim Bhutan part

of Bengal, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh from land access to the rest of India. Consequently in the background of Sino-Indian border dispute Sikkim due to its strategic and crucial position can exert an influence on the course of events far beyond its comparative strength would seem to warrant. But inspite of strategic importance of Sikkim, the kingdom emerged as focus of controversy quite late. It did not play prominent part in the earlier stages of Sino-Indian border dispute.¹ This delay was probably due to the fact that Sikkim Tibet border is the only section of Himalayan frontier that had been delimited by treaty and demarcated on the ground during the British rule. The boundary between Sikkim and Tibet was defined by the Anglo-Chinese convention of 1890, which stipulated - "The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into Sikkim-Tista and its affluence from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu and northward into other rivers of Tibet.

1. White Paper No. VI : P.6

It is admitted that the British Government whose protectorate over Sikkim state is hereby recognized has direct and exclusive control over the internal administration and foreign relations of the state, and except thru and with permission of the British Government neither the ruler of the state nor any of its official relations of any kind, formal or informal with any country.

It was jointly demarcated on the ground in 1895. The actual demarcation of Sikkim Tibet boundary was delayed by the Chinese Government's procrastination in deputing officials to join them. This was according to Tibetan source, due to the non co-operation of Tibetan authorities who were angered by the action of the Chinese in concluding a treaty that affected Tibet without the prior concurrence of Dalai Lama's Government. Tibet however, confirmed this boundary alignment in the Lhasa convention of 1904.¹ All Chinese maps published since

1. Tibet - Past and Present : Sir Charles Bell:
P.280-81.

1890 depicted the alignment as was defined in 1890 and demarcated on the ground subsequently. On several occasions since 1950 China re-affirmed its acceptance of the 1890 convention including the Sikkim-Tibet boundary as demarcated. This is evident by Chinese foreign ministry note to Government of India, dated December 26, 1959 which said "The boundary between China and Sikkim has long been formally delimited and there is neither any discrepancy between the maps nor any dispute in practice."¹ Hence inspite of massive military build up by the Chinese along the Sikkim-Tibet border. Except for a few stray incidents of intrusions, China did not seriously violate the territorial limits of Sikkim in the earlier phase of Sino-Indian border skirmishes and confrontation. However, before 1962, the Chinese soldier on atleast one occasion seriously attempted to alter the boundary of Sikkim to their advantage.

1. White Paper No. III - 1960 : P.79

When the Indian Prime Minister, Nehru has visited the Sikkim Tibet border on September, 1958 on his way to Bhutan, to mark the occasion a commemorative movement was erected a few hundred yards inside the Sikkim territory. The Chinese soldiers taking advantage of the situation tried to claim the right to go as far as commemorative tablet, claiming that it acutally marked the border between Sikkim and Tibet. But they could not succeed in the venture.

Since 1960, the Chinese have been more evasive, however, on the question whether the goernment of India has succeeded the British as the 'paramount' authority in Sikkim as recognized in the convention of 1890. Though never explicit on the subject, Chinese action, prior to 1960 implied a recognition of the Indian protectorate in Sikkim. This synchronised well with the earlier phase of Sino-Indian goodwill and friendship. The Chinese position however changed after the happenings in Tibet in March 1959. Since 1959 her main objective has been to question the validity of treaty relations

between India and Sikkim under which the foreign relations defence and communication of the latter are the responsibility of India. The renewed Chinese interest in Sikkim after the tragic happening in Tibet in 1959 is on account of several reasons. Firstly on in strategic terms Sikkim provides the shortest route between Tibet and gangetic plain. The passes of the section of the border are low in the context of Himalayas and often not impossibly snow bound during winter months. Once the border passes have been crossed, the Tista river valley provides a comparatively easy access route to the plains and the one in which there is now a well developed communication network lies.

Secondly, Sikkim is on classic route of the communist conquest "the road to Paris lies through Peking and Calcutta". Chinese can have a position of advantage and strength with Sikkim under their influence or possible control. Through subversion, the Chinese can possibly boost commu-

nist revolutionary base in Bengal and tribal based political upheavals in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, by a limited military campaign or even in threat to this vital and strategic Indian territory the Indian defence have been strengthened in this region and as such chances of Chinese military campaign have reduced to a considerable extent. Sikkim stands tough in the frontier of the defence in this area.

Lastly like Curzon Peking sees in Sikkim and other Himalayan kingdoms the role of a buffer state in the context of geo-political realism. It could provide a belt of land for defence or a frontier in depth as Curzon described it, which could not be crossed without sounding the alarm of invasion. China today views Himalayan states as outer line of their defence.¹ To consolidate their hold on Tibet, The Chinese were looking towards the Hima-

1. A History of Sino-Indian Relations: Hostile Co-existence : John Rowland : P.75.

layan kingdoms including Sikkim.¹ These strategic consideration prompted the Chinese Government to part the Indian relationship with Sikkim to doubt and conflict with this end in view Chou-En-Lai in his letter to Nehru on September, 8, 1959 said- "In your Excellency's letter (March 22, 1959) you also referred to the boundary between China and Sikkim. Like the boundary between China and Bhutan, this question does not fall within the scope of our present discussion. It would like however, to take this opportunity to make clear once again that China is willing to live together in friendship with Sikkim and Bhutan without committing aggression against each other, and has always respected the proper relations between them and India.

Similarly, as discussed earlier in the series of border talks between the officials of the two governments, in 1960-61 held at Peking, Delhi, Rangoon, Chinese delegation consistently refused to

1. Friends Not Master (London 1967) : Md. Ayub Khan: P.160.

discuss the issue pertaining to the boundaries with Sikkim and Bhutan since they do not fall within the scope of the Sino-Indian boundary question."

The Indians however left no doubt for the Chinese that the boundaries of Sikkim and Bhutan with Tibet were the legitimate responsibility of the Government of India and hence came within the purview of these talks. The Indian Government reminded China that in the case of Sikkim, the Chinese government had categorically recognized the continuing validity of the convention of 1890 which had expressly acknowledged India's responsibility for the external relations of Sikkim.¹ Nehru felt it necessary to re-iterate that Sikkim and Bhutan did very much come within the scope of discussion of the boundary question. He reminded China that India had undertaken certain responsibilities for the defence of Sikkim and Bhutan. If something happen on their border

1. White Paper No. VI : P.6

it is the something as an interference with the border of India. Similarly, the Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim said in Calcutta on Feb. 24, 1961 that the Chinese refusal to accept the special position of India in Sikkim as "pure and simple cutoff. The Chinese talks of "separate status of Sikkim" was designed to confuse the people of Sikkim and disturb their friendly relations with India. He said that "we are happy with our present relations with India and quite sure that India would honour the 1950 treaty and repulse the Chinese overtures.

The implications of Chinese stand questioning the very basis of India's treaty rights and special position in the strategically located kingdom of Sikkim were ominous. The full significance of nearly eight years of Cartographic aggression and four years of sporadic violation of Indian borders, became clear and served as an adequate warning for the future. In fact Chinese since 1962 have been contemplating limited claims on the Sikkimese territory involving the boundary lines in the Nathu La

area and several pasture lands in the northern area. The people of Sikkim could see the designs of China's dragons clearly.

The massive Chinese invasion of India on October 20, 1962, the threatened attack on India across the Sikkim-Tibet border in 1965 and artillery fire skirmishes on Nathu La in 1967 were above all, dramatic demonstration of China's willingness to use aggression as an instrument of foreign policy in an area which wanted peace and tranquility. Sikkim was completely exposed to expansionist designs of China. Hence Sikkim rallied behind India against the unabashed aggression on the territorial integrity of India with whom it had already linked its destiny. In the midst of military build up the Chinese in the Chuntu valley in Tibet. The Maharaj Kumar of Sikkim issued a statement on No. 1, 1962 reiterating that Sikkim stood solidly behind India. If the Chinese attacked Sikkim, they will not find it a easy adventure. We

will show them that we can defend ourselves over main concern now is to extend full cooperation to Indian soldiers guarding our frontiers.¹

In view of the emergency created by the grave Chinese menace, the general elections to the Sikkim Council were postponed in consultation with the representative of all the political parties in Sikkim. A state of emergency was proclaimed in the state. Steps were taken to organize civil defence, and various committees were set up for the purpose. A consultative Committee of the 32 members with diverse political opinions in the state represented on it, was set up with the Maharaj Kumar as its Chairman.² To demonstrate Sikkim's faith in India the Maharaj Kumar who was then the virtual ruler of the state said:

Sikkim stands firmly by the side of India in prosperity and adversity and this has been amply demonstrated by the unstinted support we have given to the Government of India, in this hour of crisis.³

1. The Mail Madras Nov. 3, 1962

2. Hindustan Times: 6th January, 1963.

3. Amrit Bazar Patrika : 25th June, 1963.

Nehru to reassure Sikkim and the Indians told the Executive Committee of the Congress Parliamentary party that the government was prepared for the eventuality of Sikkim being attacked.¹

We have treaty relations with Sikkim under which the defence of Sikkim is the responsibility of Government of India. We recognize fully that responsibility and we shall endeavour to discharge it fully. We have made arrangements to that end.

BOUNDARY ALIGNMENT OF NATHU LA

China had been apparently uneasy with the boundary line in the vicinity of Nathu La on Sikkim Chumbi Valley border. The Chinese discovered in 1962 and even more forcefully in 1965 and 1967 that the boundary alignment in this area as demarcated in 1894-95 places the Indian army guarding Sikkim astride the ridge that controls the access to the pass from the North. Thus the Chinese forces stationed in

1. Indian Express : December 14, 1962.

the Chumbi valley can make their way up to border area only under continuous observation of Indian defence position on the ridge. This gives considerable strategic advantage to Indian army. While the Chinese dissatisfaction with the boundary alignment has been made abundantly clear in a series of notes exchanged between India and China since 1963, their assertion of territorial claims in the pass areas has been vague and subject to various interpretations. The issue first arose in the aftermath of the Chinese aggression on India in 1962 and then erupted in a more violent manner during 1965 Indo-Pakistan war and again in 1967. In a note dated January 10, 1963 to the government of India the Chinese charged that the Indian troops have crossed the Nathu La on 28th September, 1962, intruded 3000 miles into Chinese territory and constructed 39 (11 big and 28 small) pill boxes.¹ In its reply dated January 16, 1963 in a note handed over

1. White Paper No. VIII, P.79

to the Chinese embassy in New Delhi, the Government of India rejected the charges as "completely groundless", the note said.

China kept on accusing India of border violations in the region. Subsequent Chinese communication on the issue, however added a new feature which could be interpreted as a demand for the redemarcation of the boundary in the strategically placed pass area. In a note of "serious protest" on March 24, 1963, the Chinese again demanded.

The Indian side stop all its aggressive activities on the China-Sikkim border, completely dismantle the defence works, big or small, which have been illegally set up on Chinese territory and order the intruding Indian troops to withdraw immediately from Chinese territory."

It further charged India of deliberately trying to maintain tension, upset tranquility on China Sikkim border and sowing discord in the relations between China and Sikkim which has always lived in friendship.¹ Elaborating on this alle-

1. White Paper No. IX : P.31-32

gation in a later note dated June 4, 1963, the Chinese asserted that all military structures on the "Chinese side of the slope" be dismantled;¹ a month and a half later, on July 31, 1963, China again raked up the issue by charging India in a fresh note that "military structure built by India at Nathu La clearly lie beyond the watershed and extend to the scope on the Chinese side of the pass."

However India rejected these "preposterous and baseless allegations which could have only one motive" to fabricate a fictitious justification for the continuous aggressive concentration. In fact China aimed at not to permit India to undertake protective defence works at her own side of the border, to defend herself from Chinese attacks.² China's repeated attempts to create tension on the Sikkim Tibet border, apart from getting a favourable ground near Nathu La, could hence be charac-

1. White Paper No. IX : P.31-32

2. India & China : Sudhakar Bhat : P.208

terised as a mischievious design to contest the special treaty relationship between Sikkim and India. The leaders of political parties in Sikkim also denounced the Chinese charges of "Indian intrusion in the Nathu La region" as undue interference in the cordial relations between India & Sikkim.¹ It may be pointed out here that such tactics have occupied an important place in the propaganda weaponry of Communist China. Nathu La which had been subject of controversy since 1962 between India and China, is an extremely strategic pass. Since the Tibet border starts from the other side of the top of the pass, which is a slope facing the Chumbi valley, where the Chinese have concentrated considerable forces, Indian troops are in a very commanding position, sitting stop at 14,600 high ridge over looking the Chumbi valley. The commanding height on this 500 yards feet wide pass favours India. The Indians can oversee Chinese

1. Hindustan Times : October 16, 1963.

military fortifications in the Chumbi valley of Tibet from considerable distance. As against this, the Chinese can only know the front line, Indian defences, but they cannot possibly be expected to locate targets in the rear. With the result the Indian army artillery retaliation can defeat all offensive Chinese designs upto a considerable long distance. It is clear that the Chinese are perturbed and unhappy over this position and want to have a firm control over the top of the Nathu La, for achieving, this ulterior motives in this region.

Secondly, the Chinese strategy has been that by repeating allegations against India of "border violations in pass area, they will be able to give impression to Sikkim people that India is bent upon to bring war to Sikkim People. Such effort is to impress Sikkim people that they should not rely on India's defence capacity to protect Sikkim.

Hence Militarily Nathu La is unique. It is perhaps the only international frontier in the world at a tremendous height where the troops of two hostile neighbours confront and co-exist at a very short distance. This seems as an observation post of the two countries. Nathu La hence is an acutely sensitive spot, in the scheme of both Indian and Chinese defences. The Indians have reinforced their positions since 1962, well aware that a Chinese invasion through Sikkim, could enable China to reach the gangetic plains. Nathu La opens the direct route to the Siliguri Corridor which links up with the troubled areas of Assam, NEFA, Manipur, Mizo-hills and Nagaland besides Bhutan and Sikkim.¹

1965 INDO-PAK WAR AND CHINESE

DESIGNS ON SIKKIM

Communist China got very opportune moment when Pakistan attacked India in 1965. China moved its forces on Sikkim-Tibet border in considerable

1. In the Article "Sikkim - Cold War in Himalayas" Published in "Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, Vol. IV, No. 3, January, 12, 1969:P.204

strength. This time for the first time that exchange of fire had taken place between Chinese and Indian troops over strategic passes leading to Chumbi valley.¹ In mid-August when the situation in Kashmir valley had reached critical proportion and an expansion of conflict to other areas of India's western border with Pakistan seemed imminent, the Chinese again in their proverbial copybook style sent a note to New Delhi alleging Indian troops incursion across Nathu La and referred again to the Indian Military structures in "Chinese territory". In a second note of September 8, 1965 Peking accused India afresh of intruding into Chinese territory and building aggressive military structures there. The note said.

"Facts have proved once again that India has not the slightest respect for its neighbours but makes incursions harassment and encroaches upon them whenever there is a chance. China cannot but pay serious attention to the Indian Government's expansionist actions against its neighbours and streng-

1. Indian Express: November 5, 1965

then China's defences and heighten her alertness along her borders."

By mid September, 1965 when it became apparent Pakistan is not going well in war, China thought the moment is quite opportune to give proper lesson to India. At 1 P.M. Peking time on September 17, 1965, the foreign ministry summoned the Indian charged affairs Jagat S. Mehta and delivered to him an ultimatum which read:

"The Chinese Government now demands that India dismantle all its military works for aggression on the Chinese side of the China-Sikkim boundary or on the boundary itself within three days of the delivery of the present note, and immediately stop all its intrusions along the Sina-Indian Boundary and China-Sikkim boundary, return the kidnapped Chinese border inhabitants and the seized livestock and pledge to refrain from any more harassing raids across the boundary otherwise the Indian Government must bear full responsibility for all the grave consequences arising therefrom.¹

1. Asian Recorder : Vol. XI, No. 41: Oct.8-14, 1965
P.6718

The border inhabitants were numbered as four and the livestock as 59 yaks and 800 sheep. The Indian Government in its reply dated September 17, however, rejected all the allegations levelled against India. Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri read out the relevant portions of the Indian Government's reply to Peking in the Parliament and said.

"We are informing China that its contention is incorrect. Nevertheless as an earnest of India's desire for peace and to give no ground to Chinese to make it a pretext for aggression, we are informing them that we have no objection to a joint inspection of these points on the Sikkim-Tibet border where Indian personnel are alleged to have set up military structures in Tibetan territory." Lal Bahadur Shastri giving a background to the latest exchange of notes between the two governments said that India had constructed some defence structures on the Sikkim-Tibetan boundary in September, 1962. Since Chinese alleged these structures were on their side of the boundary. India had gone to the extent

of suggesting that an independent observer be sent to the border for inspection. This suggestion was rejected by the Chinese government which insisted on joint inspection. India has now accepted the proposal. However Shastri told the Parliament, "The House may rest assured that we are fully vigilant and that, if we are attacked we shall fight for our freedom with grime determination."¹

The Chogyal of Sikkim Palden Thondup Namgyal said in Calcutta on September 17, 1965 that people of Sikkim would resist to the last man any aggression by China" into our territory. He strongly repudiated the Chinese allegation that India had build up military fortification on Tibetan side of Sikkim-Tibet border. Sikkimese were undaunted by the Chinese threat. The people were not in any way perturbed by the Chinese troops activity along the Sikkim-Tibet border and the morale of the people in North Sikkim was exceptionally high.²

1. Indian Express : September 18, 1965

2. Indian Express : September 25, 1965

On September 19, that is one day before the ultimatum was to expire Chinese extended their ultimatum for another three days until the midnight of September 22, 1965. By this time the India Pakistan war was under discussion in the Security Council of the United Nations. The Chinese ultimatum was apparently intended to encourage Pakistan to resist the United Nations, Russian and American pressures on the ceasefire proposal. The extension of ultimatum was a device to know what comes out of the discussion in the Security Council.

On September 21, Indian and Chinese forces exchanged fire across the Nathu La on Sikkim-Tibet border. On 20th September the Security Council adopted a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Indo-Pakistan war. India and later Pakistan accepted the resolution. Ceasefire went into effect on 23rd, September. China allowed the time limit upto 22nd September of their ultimatum to expire without taking any further action. Without waiting for return of the 'captured yaks and goats' the Chinese

pulled back to their side of the border. The New China News Agency attributed this to the Indian compliance of their demand. India however denied this version of the story. The destruction of Military structure would have had to be accomplished between 19th September, the date of last Chinese note demanding their dismantling and 22nd September. By this time however Chinese forces have moved up from the Chumbi valley and were entrenched on the border in same strength. It would have been impossible for the Indian troops to have moved across the border without clashing head on with Chinese.

In New Delhi 301 sheep were paraded in front of the Chinese embassy. "Shepherds" representing the various political parties led the sheep bearing placards which said "Eat us and spare the world". 'Are you going to plunge the world into horrible war, for the sake of few sheep?"

A series of incursions by the Chinese across the Tibet-Sikkim border continued at short intervals in the months of October and November,

usually coincidental with development in the India Pakistan dispute. A cluster of minor incidents on Sikkim-Tibet border, for instance accompanied the Soviet Unions offer to mediate in the dispute and Pakistan's acceptance of the offer on Nov.11,1965.

MOTIVES OF THE CHINESE MOVE

The exact motives behind the Chinese performance were obscure Mr. Shastri told Parliament "what China is looking for is not redress of grievances, real or imaginary, but some excuse to start its aggressive activities again, this time acting in collision with its ally, Pakistan."

William E.Griffith of Massaehusettes Institute of Technology said, "it is doubtful that Peking ever intended to use serious military force against India, the mere so because Pakistan was too fearful of U.S. intervention against Peking to accept major Chinese assistance." Hence the lack of Chinese military action indicated that Peking was

probably effectively deterred by Washington from attacking India. This explains the rationale behind the Peking's opening of Sikkim border which was useful for political pressure, but unsuitable for limited military assault since it was one of the best defended posts manned by the Indian forces. Notably the Chinese further minimised their involvement by waiting until the closing days of the conflict to intrude.

Thus the Chinese at the end of 1965 strengthened their own posture against India aimed their great failure and to wield decisive influence on the subcontinent. They had been conspicuously unable to help Pakistan or to prevent either the U. N. Ceasefire or the ultimate Tashkent peace. The full consequence of China's blunder became apparent on January 10, 1966 when Moscow sponsored peace conference in Tashkent ended as a victory for Soviet diplomacy.

NATHU LA FLARE UP - 1967

Sikkim-Tibet border near Nathu La was yet another scene of several incidents in Sept. 1967 on Sept. 11, 1967, the Chinese troops mounted another fierce attack with field artillery and heavy mortar on Indian troops position on Nathu La. The Times (September 12, 1967) comments on Sikkim. Tibet border clashes says, "It is more serious than the usual run of scuffles and skirmishes along the Himalayas."

The provocation in this instance was the construction of barbed wire on the border of Nathu La to prevent Chinese intrusion. The China obstructed and an artillery duel ensued in which a number of men were killed on both sides.

The Government of India protested strongly in the following words.

"Since the first week of August strong detachments of Chinese troops have repeatedly intruded into Sikkim territory across the international border between Sikkim and Tibet and have carried

out a series of increasingly serious provocations culminating in an armed attack. The Chinese Government is well aware that the Sikkim-Tibet border is a well defined international border and has been recognized as such by China. By launching an armed attack the Chinese Government is seeking to build up tension at a point which has never been in dispute. In order to reduce tension and prevent the situation from assuming a very serious aspect. The government of India suggests both sides ceasefire immediately and two sector commanders of the respective forces meet at Nathu La.¹

In an another fresh note India proposed China for an unconditional ceasefire on Sikkim-Tibet border with effect from 5.33 A.M. (I.S.T.) Sept. 13, 1967 to prevent latest clashes across Nathu La into a wider Sino-Indian conflict. China made counter allegations against India for the border incidents and threatened to use their airforce if the Indians did not stop firing by Sept. 14, 1967. New China

1. Hindustan Times : September, 13, 1967.

New Agency described Indian proposal of ceasefire as gross 'deception.' It further said that they want to use the incidents to spread rumours about China's threats to Sikkim, undermine the friendly relations between the people of the two countries, strengthen Indian control over Sikkim and keep it permanently as an Indian protectorate.

However Sikkim would not be persuaded away by Chinese, it stood solidly behind India to defend its borders. The Chogyal of Sikkim visited the forward areas and the civil defence measures were put into full gear in the kingdom. However, the shelling was stopped. But after some time the Chinese kept on intrusions and provocations intermittently on the border on one or the other pretext. On Oct. 30, 1967, India protested to China against its activities on the Sikkim frontier, and conveyed to it the former's resolve to "repel any aggression against frontiers (of Sikkim) the guarding of which is its responsibility."

However yet another Chinese effort to force the withdrawal of the Indian Military positions from the commanding heights overlooking the Chumbi valley, where the Chinese have concentrated considerable forces, failed."

It seems that border skirmishes at Sikkim-Tibet border during 1967 were indication of Chinese motive that China would not hesitate to swallow Sikkim, if Indian troops ever crossed the border. The guards at Sikkim can not rest they ought to be vigilant.

SIKKIMESE ENCLAVE IN TIBET

One other potential source of controversy between China and Sikkim has been over the several small enclaves in Tibet which had long been the private estates of the Sikkim Royal family. They are located in Scar, Dopta, Telling and Chumbi area. The total area of these estates is 100 miles. Even the Chumbi valley in historical times formed part of Sikkim.

Until the last decades of 19th Century, it had been customary for the Sikkim Royal family to reside in their estates during summer months. However the British stopped the practice when they took over the control of Sikkim administration in 1890.

The degree of authority exercised by Sikkim Durbar over the family estates in Tibet would seem to have been limited but there is no doubt that they enjoyed a special position under Tibetan administration system. The inhabitants were exempted from custom duties and customary Tibetan taxes on Wool, salt and several other items, and they paid land revenue directly to the Sikkim Royal family. They could travel between the estates and Sikkim without the permit from the Tibetan authorities. The Tibetan Legal system was not in force on the estates, nor could the Tibetan authorities conscript the inhabitants as they could Tibetan subjects. A Sikkimese official called Kutchhab, supervised these estates for the Royal family from his post at Phari in the Chumbi valley.¹

China did not interfere with the existing administrative process on the Sikkimese estates until several years after their seizure of Tibet in 1950. It was only in 1959 coincidental with the Tibetan uprising, that reports of Chinese intervention in the enclaves reached the outside world. In an informal note dated 25th April, 1960, India asked China to allow facilities of movement to Sikkim." for the inhabitants of these estates. The Chinese authorities apparently paid no attention to this request, and have continued to exercise the right to control all travel movements between Sikkim and Tibet.

¹ L. Sikkim and India : Storm and Consolidation: B S K Grover: Page-169.

C H A P T E R I I I

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH SIKKIM BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

East India Company's venture for trade relations with Sikkim:

The British Government of India sought to establish commercial relations in the countries beyond Himalayas as soon as their conquests in India touched the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas in 1967. They did not however achieve much success till the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814-15. This war was the first major breakthrough for the British territories in Kumaon and Garhwal contiguous to that of Tibet. They opened trade channels through the Himalayas progressively for increased intercourse between India and countries beyond the Himalayas.¹ The special treaty relations which they established with Punjab and Jammu-Kashmir between 1816-1870 enabled them to consolidate their position in the western Himalayas and extend their influence to Central Asia. The need to check the growth of Russian influence in Central Asia and the isolationist nature of the policies of Tibet largely moulded British policy in Himalayas.

1. The Himalayan Borderland : Ram Rahul Vikas Pub. P.45

British came in contact with Sikkim during its war with Nepal in 1814, when Gurkhas encroached Company's territories in Gorakhpur Terai. In this war Gurkhas fought bravely and with much success.¹ It was remoured that Nepal and Bhutan separated by small kingdom of Sikkim, were about to conclude a military alliance against the company. The company therefore wanted to isolate Nepal and prevent it, from getting assistance from any quarter especially from China, since China was exercising suzerainty over Nepal from 1792 onwards. This alliance with Sikkim could have served three fold advantages i.e. facilitate communication with China via Tibet, 2. prevent Nepalese Bhutanese intrigues against the Company, and 3. level anã attack on Gurkha flank. Captain Barre Latter of Bengal Army was entrusted with the job. Captain met Chugphi Namgyal, the ruler of Sikkim and pursued to negotiate a treaty with Company. Namgyal agreed for the

1. A Collection of Treaties, engagements & sanads relating to India and Neighbouring countries : C V Aitchison. Comp. (Calcutta 1909) Vol.2, p.94, as quoted in India and Sikkim by P R Rao - P.17

treaty. On the assurance given by Captain Barre Latter that Company would restore all the territories of Sikkim lost to Nepal. It would be proper to mention here that in 1780 Nepal invaded Sikkim and during the course of following 30 years over ran its territory as far-east as the river Tista and conquered and annexed the Terai or low lying area.¹

Lord Moira (afterwards Marquis of Hastings) the Governor General of India, decided to restore to Sikkim a part of the territory wrestled from Nepal in the hope of winning favour from Sikkim, for Company. Hence treaty of Titalia was signed between Company and Sikkim in 1817.

THE TREATY OF TITALIA & ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The treaty of Titalia runs as follows into ten articles.

Under article one of the treaty Company made over in full sovereignty to the Raja of Sikkim Chugphi Namgyal, the territory lying between river Metchi

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.2 : Published Sterling Publishers.

and Tista. The Raja agreed for his part.

(2) Not to commit aggression on the Gurkhas or any other state.

(3) To submit to the arbitration of the Company for disputes with Nepal and other neighbouring states,

(4) To render military assistance to the Company in case of need where they are engaged in war on hills,

(5) Not to allow any European or Americans to reside in his kingdom without obtaining the permission of the Company,

(6) To deliver up British Indian dacoits who may take refuge in his kingdom,

(7) Not to afford protection to the British Indian revenue defaulters or other delinquents,

(8) Not to levy transit duties on British merchandise and to afford protection to merchants and traders from Company's provinces,

(9) In return for these privileges Company under article 9 guaranteed to the Raja and his successors

the peaceable possession of the territory made over to him under article one.

(10) The parties agreed to ratify treaty.

Treaty of Titalia brought two fold advantages for the Company. Firstly, with the restoration of territory between the river Metchi and Tista to Sikkim, it provided a strong buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan. In the words of H T Prinsep, secretary to the Government of India, the effect of Treaty of Titalia had been -

"to shut the Nepalese from any ambitious views of aggrandisement to the east, and to circumscribe their territories on three sides while on the fourth the stupendous range of Himalayas and the Chinese frontier present an effectual barrier."¹

Secondly it brought Sikkim for the first time under the influence of Company, as articles 2 to 8 had limited the freedom of action of Sikkim to a large extent. Thirdly the Company gained many

1. History of Political & Military transactions during the administration of Marquis of Hastings : H T Prinsep, : 1813-1823, 2 Vols (London 1825) vol. 1: P.207: as quoted by P R Rao: P.4.

trade privileges, the most important of them being the right to trade upto the Tibetan frontier through the territory of friendly kingdom. Moreover Sikkim was found to afford more ready communication with Lhasa and China than that thru Bhutan.

The treaty of Titalia thus marks the beginning of British interest in Sikkim as a trade route to Sikkim and as a factor in India's security.¹

THE CESSION OF MORUNG

Even after signing the treaty of Titalia Company still felt the strong need to strengthen the relations with Sikkim so that Sikkim can act as an effective buffer between Nepal and British India. Barre Latter maintained that Company could execute that policy by ceding Morung (low land between river Metchi and Mahanadi) to the Raja of Sikkim as it would enable him to "subsist the garrisons he must maintain for the protection of the passes" between his country and Nepal.²

1. The Private Journal of Marques of Hastings : 2 vols. London, 1858 Vol.1 P.146

2. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.5

Morung was granted to Raja with certain conditions, namely, that - (1) Treaty of Titalia were to be in force in Morung also.

- (2) That Sikkim was to surrender to the Company all British Indian criminals and other public defaulter who may take refuge in Morung, and to allow the Police officers of the Company to pursue them into those lands so as to arrest them and
- (3) that in times of emergency, the Governor General's orders to the local authorities were to be obeyed in the same manner as those coming from the Raja of Sikkim.

It is evident from the above conditions that the Company had lost nothing by making over the Morung to Raja, on the contrary, it gained control over him since he was obliged, under the terms of the grants, to allow the Company to exercise suzerain rights over the Morung.

CESSION OF DARJEELING: AN EXAMPLE EXHIBITING
GROWING HOLD OF COMPANY OVER SIKKIM :

From 1817 to 1826, nothing very significant happened between Sikkim and Company, but in 1827 when Raja of Sikkim was involved in a dispute between his Lepcha and Bhutia subjects, boundary dispute between Sikkim and Nepal over a piece of hill land called Ontoo also arose. Raja referred the dispute to Company as according to the terms of treaty of Titalia Raja was not free to solve any boundary dispute alone. Governal General, Lord William Bentack appointed two officials to visit the disputed territory. During this investigation they came across a small hill village called Darjeeling, which was thought to be good for sanatorium purposes and also politically useful. The findings were placed before Governor General who in turn placed it before his council, but was rejected on the ground that it would earn displeasure of Raja of Sikkim and arouse suspicion in the mind of Nepal. The matter was dropped for the time being. In 1833 it was again revived when the Lepchas refugees in Nepal who had fled from Sikkim in 1826 made an inroad in Sikkim. Bentick

wanted to exploit the situation to acquire Darjeeling in exchange for an equivalent either in land or money. He further proposed to seek the opinion of Hodgson, the British Resident at Kathmandu, on the likely reaction of Nepal over construction of sanatorium so near their border. Hodgson replied that any attempt to sound and conciliate Nepal with reference to the Company's proposal for a sanatorium at Darjeeling would result more harm than good. He, therefore, suggested that they should make a casual and careless intimation as soon as the matter was ripe for implementation and not before. Once again the matter was dropped due to opposition of Mitcalfe. Matter was taken up again in 1833 when Metcalfe was not in the council. Captain Lloyd was deputed for the job.

On reaching Sikkim Durbar, before Lloyd could place his proposal Raja himself made three requests to him, they were :-

- (1) That the boundary of his kingdom might be extended upto Konchi,

- (2) That Kummo Pradhan the embezzler of the Morung revenues be arrested and delivered to him,
- (3) That Delegong might be added to his kingdom.

Lloyd pleaded his inability to accede to his first demand as it was beyond his power. Regarding second he did not make any commitment except expressing the wish that he might mediate between the Raja and the Lepchas and their Kazis so as to settle their disputes. As to third request of Raja Lloyd mentioned that the Governor General desired to have Darjeeling in exchange for land in plains or for a sum of money. On hearing this Raja informed Lloyd that he would give the answer the next day.

The document which was submitted the sixth day contained two requests namely that - (1) Kummo Pradhan should be made to account for the embezzlement and and restore his plunder and (2) that Debegong should be ceded to Sikkim. Raja further informed Lloyd that if his requests are complied with, he would give Darjeeling to the Company "out of friendship."¹

1. Letter of Lloyd to Govt. of India : 9th Mar., 1835.

Lloyd considered it important to obtain Darjeeling by ceding Debagong to Sikkim. For him Darjeeling was important "as a military post that must stand pre-eminent."

Here one must ponder, whether Government was justified in rejecting Raja's request for surrender of Kummo Pradhan. Under Article 7 of Treaty of Titalia, the Raja of Sikkim was bound "not to afford protection to any defaulters of revenue or other delinquents, when demanded by the British Government through their accredited agents. The desire of Raja of Sikkim was, to make that article binding ~~was~~ British also was natural enough, especially when Kummo Pradhan was charged with serious offence like the criminal misappropriation of revenue. The company neither arrested Kummo Pradhan nor compelled him to render account of the default. The plea of Governor General to the Raja was that, "it is not consistent with our practice to call people to account for money transactions which have taken place in foreign territories!" This plea could not convince

the Raja, especially when he suspected that Kummo Pradhan had treasonable intentions of giving away Morung to Nepal.

Government after rejecting Raja's condition for transfer of Darjeeling asked, Lloyd to point out any waste land in the neighbourhood of Sikkim which could be transferred to Raja and if no waste land is to be found Lloyd should find out what pecuniary compensation could be given to Raja. Regarding pecuniary compensation Lloyd valued 120,000 but doubted its acceptance by Raja as Raja gave little importance to money. Knowing Raja's unwillingness to accept money Charles McIlcalfe, officiating Governor General asked Lloyd to stop further negotiation. But Lloyd already negotiated the deed with Raja. How the deed was negotiated is not clear by available documents, but it was an important event in the history of East India Company's relations with Sikkim. Darjeeling became the observation post of the British in the Himalayas and placed them in the close touch with all the hill states of Eastern Himalayas and also constantly reminded them of the possibilities of trade with Tibet.

MISSION OF JOHN EDGAR : AN EFFORT TO
ENHANCE TRADE PROSPECTS WITH TIBET:

After the conclusion of the treaty of 1861, British government was expecting much increase of the British trade in Tibet via Sikkim. To open British trade in Tibet it was essential to open communication with its government first.

Commissioner of Coonch Bihar Colonel J.C. Haughton proposed in October 1869 to cultivate friendship with Tibet. The proposal was turned down by the Government of Bengal on the ground that it would do mere harm than good to India. In his letter to the Government of India Sir William Grey the Lt. Governor of Bengal wrote,

"These relations (between India and Tibet) are at present so satisfactory that the Government of that country (Tibet) have always, it is believed declined to take any action in matters relating to frontier politics when applied to for its interference by its two quasi-feudatories, Sikkim and Bhutan, for the fear by so doing, it should be

brought into collision with the British Government. Their reply to application from these frontier states have always been that so long as the British Government does not attempt to interfere with the frontiers of Tibet proper they have no desire to intervene.¹

Government of India did not agree with the above proposal. Duke of Angyll the secretary of state, also suggested that Government of India should leave the policy of isolation towards Tibet and should resume the former friendly relations with its rulers which were opened by Warren Hastings. Haughton was encouraged by such views and after examining the whole question, made the following suggestions.

(1) The court of Peking should be moved to take effectual steps in the spirit of existing treaties to remove all restrictions on the free passage of British Indian merchants and travellers to Tibet.

1. Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India quoted by P R Rao on Page 50-51, in his book India and Sikkim.

(2) Maharaja of Sikkim should be asked to obtain from the Tibetan authorities, information as to the duties levied on their frontier and prohibition if any, to the import of particular article, with a view if necessary for further communication. He felt that if the barriers were removed 'a very important increase to commerce by way of Sikkim and Bhutan would take place.

Before acting on Haughton's proposal Government of India asked the opinion of Sir Thomas Wade the British Minister at Peking, about possible Chinese reaction, On opening communication with Tibet, and asked if China can render any help in this matter. Wade replied in negative and said, Government of India should contact Amban at Lhasa who can be bribed.

The Government of India sent a letter to Dzungpen of Phari through Maharaja of Sikkim, asking him to transmit the letter to the superior authorities at Lhasa. Dzungpen refused to do so on the ground that his government does not want any communication with the government of India. Communication with Tibet through China was not possible.

Wade felt that "Chinese were not prepared to allow European travellers or traders to enter Tibet at any point." He advised the Government of India not to make any representation to Chinese unless "our proposition be of such a nature as to make it impossible for the Chinese to be elective to entertain it, we are certain to be met 'in limine' by the rejection of it.

While the Government of India was trying its best to open the trade with Tibet, a strong movement was being launched in England by the British Merchant Community to open Tibetan market through Sikkim route. Various measures were suggested by them such as, (1) Early completion of the Calcutta-Darjeeling railway, (2) The establishment of mart on the Sikkim-Tibet-frontier. (3) Opening of Consular agencies at Lhasa and Shigatse.

OBSTACLES FOR TRADE IN SIKKIM TIBET ROUTE:

Desides Chinese and Tibetan opposition, there was one severe obstacle which the Government

of India was facing in opening Sikkim route to Tibet. Primarily the road from Sikkim to Tibet was not good and secondly in 1873 the trade on Sikkim-Tibet frontier was stopped by Tibetan authorities.

Government of India thought it better to ask Maharaja of Sikkim to help John Edgar during his visit to meet Tibetan authorities, in return Maharaja would be given certain concessions. Edgar Mission was proposed and justified by Government of Bengal on the ground that every opportunity should be seized for "opening and developing trade with central Asia and to secure by increased frequency of communication more full and accurate knowledge of what goes on in the hills." Government of Bengal was encouraged to make such proposal when Dewan of Sikkim said that Tibetan authorities, themselves are willing to open up trade relations with India, but they are afraid of China.

EDGAR'S VIST TO SIKKIM

Edgar entered Sikkim in October, 1873 with a view to study present state of things there (Sikkim-Tibet) the actual condition, extent and prospects of trade with Tibet-the best passage and possibility of opening another.

Edgar on reaching the frontier of Tibet, met Ex-Dewan of Sikkim i.e. Namguay, who was prohibited to enter Sikkim, and obtained much information of what was going on in Tibet. Edgar was informed by Namguay that one faction of Tibetans was very strongly feeling to leave the policy of isolation, but they are not free to do so. Hence Edgar should contact Chinese officials for the purpose. Edgar wrote a letter to Amban at Lhasa. Instead of granting him a dialogue, Amban warned Maharaja of Sikkim "your state of Sikkim borders on Tibet. You know what is in our minds, and what our policy is, you are bound to prevent Peking Sahibs (British people) from crossing the frontiers yet it is entirely through your action in making the roads for

the Sahibs through Sikkim that they are going to make the projected attempt.

If you continue to behave in this manner it will not be well with you." ¹

This threatening by Amban is very important, because future policy of Government of India towards Sikkim and Tibet revolved round this. Before 1861, Tibet was confident of suzerain rights over Sikkim, hence was quite indifferent towards Tibet. On the other hand Government of India strengthened its hold over Sikkim. Now it was to be decided who is the de jure sovereign of Sikkim.

EDGAR'S PROPOSAL

Edgar came back to India and made following proposals to improve relations with Tibet.

(1) British minister at Peking should make an effort to get from Tsungli Yamen a declaration that the exclusion of British subjects from Tibet was not authorised by Chinese Government.

(2) British officers should loose no opportunity of cultivating friendly relations with the Tibetan frontier officials, at the same time should not show

any eagerness to enter Tibet.

(3) A trade mart on Sikkim Tibet border should be established.

(4) A road through Sikkim to Tibetan frontier should be constructed.

He said if above suggestions are followed friendly relations will automatically develop between the two countries. He expressed his surprise why no road was constructed after the treaty of 1861.

British foreign office was very keen in Tibetan affairs and asked. Thomas Wade to contact Chinese official, who on contacting Chinese officials in Peking never got any enthusiastic reply and informed secretary of States.

"If trade be worth of effort, I think it might possibly be opened with a mixed commercial and official mission pushed forward without reference to the court of Peking which is always careful to declare that in this or any other matter Tibet may act as she pleases, and if this mission were authorised at first instance to spend money rather freely.¹

1. Letter of Wade to East of Derby, 14 July, 1874:
P.60 : Rao.

The succeeding events would show that advocates to open trade with Tibet were so enthusiastic that they overlooked the possible implications of their hasty action. It was their diplomatic failure to seek China's help in establishing commercial relation with Tibet, in doing so they accepted Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.

MISSION OF MACAULAY
BRITISH INDIA'S ATTEMPT TO RE-ASSERT ITS
INFLUENCE IN SIKKIM;

Edgar's visit to Sikkim increased British influence over the kingdom. This influence was gradually strengthened until Nepalese problem broke up. Ever since British established their supermacy particularly with the accession of Darjeeling, the government started settling Nepalese into Sikkim because Nepalese were more laborious, they were needed for road construction purposes and for creating more cultivable land. This was resented by pro Chogyal population of Lepcha and Bhotia communities. Sikkimese were afraid that one day they might be outnumbered by Nepalese. For this Maharaja Tholab Nam-

gyal visited Kalimpong to request Lt. Governor of Bengal to restrict the number of Nepali settlers. Lt. Governor agreed to restrict their settlement to only south Sikkim but this agreement did not work due to intrigues hatched by pro Tibetan faction of Sikkimese. In 1880 riots broke out between Nepali settlers and the local people at Rhenock.¹ The riots were controlled with British intervention which greatly disappointed pro Tibetan population and they started fomenting anti British feeling in Tibet.

Government of India was much concerned with this development because Tibet had a great scope for marketing British goods. Hence government tried through Sarat Chandra Das to establish links with Lhasa in which she failed, then Lord Macaulay was deputed with the task of establishing trade links with Lhasa.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.66.

Moreover trade on Sikkim-Tibet border was closed down in December 1883 after Sarat Chandra Das's visit to Sikkim. Tibetan suspected him to be British agent came here on secret mission. Bengal Government suggested to the Government of India that a repetition of mission to Sikkim like Edgar's of 1873 was essential to investigate the causes of trade stoppage on Sikkim-Tibet frontier.¹

Before starting his visit Macaulay met Thotab Namgyal, the Maharaja of Sikkim to know the cause for the stoppage of trade at Sikkim-Tibet border. But he failed to get any information from Maharaja. That was the enough indication for British Government to understand that their influence was decreasing in Sikkim.

Macaulay met Tibetan officials at Khamba, on his way to Shigatse. He was informed by Tibetan officials that general population of Tibet is not against British but it is the Chinese officials who are opposed. Tibetan war (1883) the influence of

1. India and Sikkim: P R Rao : P.67

China in Tibet had increased. Dzungpen of Khamba impressed upon him that there is a good prospect for Indo-Tibetan trade, as whenever a man gets an article of English manufacture a hundred people come to look at it.

After his meeting with Dzungpen Macaulay formed a very optimistic picture regarding British trade prospects with Tibet and Central Asia. He felt that if free trade was allowed the British goods would snatch the Central Asian market from Russian hands. He saw a great demand for Broad cloth, cutlery and piece goods. So far as tea was concerned, he had no doubt that "with a large tea drinking population on one side of the passes and a large production of tea on the other the producers and consumers would come to an understanding if the opportunity were allowed."¹

It would be worthwhile to mention here that Macaulay like Edgar was mistaken to blame only China to cause hindrance in AngloTibetan trade. It was

1. Extract from Macaulay's memo as published in
P R Rao's Book - India and Sikkim.

actually Tibet who did not want to open their land for foreigners for fear of spoiling their culture.

On his return from Sikkim he proposed before Government of India, that government should obtain permission from China for a visit of British delegation to Lhasa and if permission for Lhasa is not available then permission to visit Tashi Lumpo, the seat of Panchen Lama should be obtained. So that it could keep alive the friendship of the people of that province towards the British". Macaulay was also of the opinion that through presents good-will of monks and other Tibetan officials can be easily obtained.

GOVT. OF INDIA'S VIEW ON MACAULAY'S PROPOSAL

The Government of India was involved in Afghanistan and Burma hence could not pay any serious attention to Macaulay's proposal. Moreover Lord Dufferin was not as optimistic as Macaulay about the trade prospects. Moreover he did not want any problem in Northern region. Macaulay met Lord Randolph Churchill when he came home in the summer of 1885. He

explained to Churchill that commercial advantages were bound to be immense as "Darjeeling is the Natural outlet and inlet for trade of Tibet and southern Mongolia. As regards political advantages, he expected much from the friendship with "the two great pontiff of Buddhist Church who exercise boundless influence over the wild tribes of Central Asia." Their influence was so great that "the present dynasty of China had to conciliate it in order to secure its own existence." He felt that time had passed for waiting, "till the wall of Chinese obstruction should fall as fell the wall of Jericho." He therefore wanted that the British should act at once and send a special envoy to Peking to secure the Chinese permission for British Mission to Lhasa.

Ultimately permission was granted to Macaulay. Macaulay was of the view that mission should be accompanied by a small army. He thought that it would create a good impression on Tibetan people; and by so doing Russian influence can be supplanted by British, because once Tibetan favour is obtained, many other

countries of Central Asia, owing allegiance to Lama of Tibet and king of China, can be easily overcome.

But Macaulay's idea of military accompanying, was not approved by Dufferin because he was sure that because of usurpation of upper Burma Chinese were not happy with British and it would create doubt, hence mission should be smaller.

Macaulay reached Sikkim-Tibet border, but was asked by the Government of India not to proceed further as China was declined to grant permission to move any further.

China was suspicious about the intention of Macaulay's mission due to following reasons:-

- (1) Mission has changed the route. It was supposed to go to Tibet thru mainland of China, but it went through Sikkim.
- (2) The size of the mission was larger, and immediately after the usurpation of Burma, it was natural to cause suspicion.
- (3) Mission included Dr. Oldham the Geologist to investigate Tibetan mineral resources.

Besides Chinese opposition British Government itself did not want to encourage the mission because at the moment the need of the hour was to have friendly relations with China, as Russia was advancing towards Tibet. The Russian expansion could only be resisted with the help of China. Therefore British Government countermanded the mission but secured Chinese recognition of British supremacy in upper Burma and concession to have trade relations with Tibet.

The failure of Macaulay's mission indicate the following flaws in British treaty with Sikkim (1861).

(1) The non recognition of definite status of Sikkim.

(2) The privilege granted to Maharaja to stay for three months in a year at Chumbi in Tibet.

Tibet tried to exploit these weaknesses to prevent the British expansion towards the north of Himalayas.

MISSION OF MACAULAY COUNTERMANDED

While mission was staying at Darjeeling other developments had taken place. Dufferin had annexed in latter part of upper Burma in 1885, a country with traditional ties to China. He was therefore anxious to obtain the Chinese recognition of this annexation. China taking advantage of British anxiety, secured the countermand of the mission. In return it recognized British rule and supermacy in Burma, to enter into a trade convention and take steps to promote and stimulate trade between India and Tibet. On 26 July, 1886, the secretary of State for India asked the government to countermand the mission.¹

The failure of the mission is not a surprise. From the very beginnning it met with determined opposition from both the Chinese and as well as the Tibetans. The British instead of allaying the suspicion of Chinese roused them by their inept handling of the negotiations when Macaulay went to peking for passports, the Chinese were under the impression that the British proposed to send the

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : Page-79.

mission to Tibet through the mainland of China since the passport were issued under the terms of Chefoo Convention of 13th September, 1876.¹

Apart from Chinese opposition the mission was unlucky to have Macaulay as its leader, because he lacked the diplomatic skill for such enterprise. The way in which he sold the project to Randolph Churchill, over the head of Dufferin was hardly calculated to win the support of the government of India for the mission. Moreover Macaulay was unable to keep anything secret even while the talks were in progress in Peking for the grant of passports. O'Connor found it necessary to caution the government of India not to give publicity to the negotiations, as he felt that if the matter became public, Russia, France and other countries would certainly harass China with similar demands. The government of India found it necessary to warn Macaulay to be especially discreet in the matter. Finally Macaulay's insistence on pomp and show proved fatal to the mission. Had the mission

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.80

been small, perhaps there would have been no trouble in reaching the destination.

Leaving aside all these consideration, the political situation in Central Asia was not conducive to the success of mission. The advance of Russia by gigantic strides towards Afghanistan was the most important event of the last quarter of 19th Century. The Russian advance to Merv, and Panjdeh crisis of 1885 emphasised the need to maintain friendly relations with China. The necessity of conciliating China became apparent as it seemed to be the bulwork against Russian Expansion in Asia. Even as early as 1883, the British Parliamentary Under Secretary announced that the British government, "was fully aware of the great and transcendent importance of good understanding," with China. The need for an understanding with China forced the government of India to cancel the mission.

It can be said the Macaulay mission failed due to following reasons:-

- (1) Government of India failed to gauge the

intensity of feeling of Tibetans against the opening of their country for foreigners.

(2) During the year 1885-86 when the mission was organized and cancelled, the government of India was involved in affairs concerning Afghanistan and Burma. It had no time to devote its attention wholly to the affairs concerning Tibet. It was therefore thought desirable to wait for some time for opening of Tibet.

The failure of Macaulay's mission and particularly the Tibetan advance after its withdrawal, however brought into focus two flaws in British treaty with Sikkim (1861) namely:

(1) The non definition of de jure status of Sikkim and

(2) The privilege granted to Maharaja to stay for 3 months in a year at Chumbi in Tibet.

Tibet tried to exploit these weaknesses to prevent the British expansion towards the north of the Himalayas. In the next chapter it will be seen how the subsequent relations of the government of India with Tibet revolved round Sikkim.

SUGGESTION OF BENGAL GOVERNMENT

The government of Bengal was quite worried at the continuous presence of Tibetans in Sikkim as it was causing alarm among the inhabitants of Darjeeling and also resulted in severe damage to the British prestige in Himalayan states. Sir River Thompson, the Lt. Governor of Bengal wanted that the government of India should take steps to secure the immediate withdrawal of Tibetans from Lingtu. He suggested three methods to secure the object;

- (1) By negotiations with Tibetan frontier officials.
- (2) By seeking China's Intervention.
- (3) Use of force.

He emphasised the use of force as the first two would be useless.¹

The Government of India was not convinced to use force as it felt Local Tibetan authorities might appeal to Lhasa and Peking in that event it may find involved itself with China. The government of India thought that it would be most prudent to leave the Tibetans alone for the moment and to see whether a delay of few weeks or months may improve the situation.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : Page-84

The expectation was belied. Tibetans showed their intention to annex Lingtu permanently by "consecrating" the spot . To the Bengal government situation was annoying. Therefore it once again asked the government of India to use force and suggested a 'local treatment' i.e. the Expulsion to Tibetans either by Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling or by Sikkim Dewan, supported by British arms. Once again the government of India rejected the suggestion as it feared that any forceful expulsion of Tibetans from Lingtu might be viewed by Chinese as an attempt to force a passage into Tibet. It is further stated :-

It is..... of far greater importance to prove that the terms of Burma-Chinese convention have been and, will be scrupulously respected, than to get rid of a troublesome handful of men at Lingtu (Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 20th January, 1887).

Dufferin was more interested to settle with China all the questions relating to the newly acquired territory of Burma. He thought that the problems of Tibetans in Sikkim could afford to wait a little longer. Moreover he was afraid that any

forceful expulsion of Tibetans from Lingtu might result in all stoppage of trade on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. In view of these considerations, all that the Bengal government allowed was to warn the Maharaja of Sikkim of the Probable consequence of his practical abandonment of Sikkim.

As the Tibetan did not vacate Lingtu even by the end of 1886, the government of India thought that the impasse could not be resolved without the intervention of Sir John Walsham, the British Minister at Peking. Therefore on 20th January, 1887, the government of India requested Walsham to seek Chinese intervention for the withdrawal of Tibetans from Lingtu.

NEW SUGGESTION OF BENGAL GOVERNMENT

While the government of India was in correspondence with Walsham, Sir Rivers Thompson made certain new suggestions to the former. Firstly he wanted that Maharaja Thotab Namgyal might be invited to Darjeeling to enter into a new treaty with the government of India, so that the weakness of 1861 treaty regarding the status of Sikkim, the right of Maharaja to levy transit duties, and his privilege

to reside in Chumbi valley of Tibet, could be removed. Secondly he wanted that the Maharaja might be used as a mediator to carry the Viceroy's letter of warning to the Tibetan government intimating that the intruders at Lingtu would be expelled from that place if they do not withdraw by 1st October, 1887. Thirdly he suggested that Tibet might be asked to send representatives to meet British officials to demarcate the Sikkim-Tibetan boundary. In order to induce Maharaja to enter into a new treaty, Sir River Thompson recommended to the government of India that annual allowance of the former might be increased from Rs. 12,000 to 18,000.

The Government of India accepted first two suggestions but rejected the third one, on the ground that the time was not ripe for entering into direct negotiations with Tibet for demarcation of Sikkim-Tibet boundary. The suggestion of Sir River Thompson to invite the Maharaja of Sikkim to Darjeeling was accepted.

In March 1887, the Government of Bengal sent an invitation to Maharaja Thotab Namgyal asking him to visit Darjeeling on or before 13th June, 1887.

Meanwhile the Tibetans showed further indication of making their annexation at Lingtu permanent by levying taxes. Sir Stuart Bayley the new Lt. Governor of Bengal was worried about the likely repercussions of continued Tibetan occupation of Lingtu. He informed the government of India, that the policy of non-intervention would weaken British position in the eyes of Sikkimese and Tibetans as well as the British subjects in India. He suggested Chinese intervention might be sought, to solve the problem, acknowledging Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.

Government of India extended two invitations to Chogyal Thotab Namgyal, he declined both of them on the ground, that according to the treaty of 1886, he cannot cross the boundary without the permission of Tibetan authorities. Chogyal's reply revealed that he repudiated the agreement between Sikkim and the Government of India, by staying for more than 3 months in Chumbi and was in complete subservience to Tibetan authorities.

The letter of Chogyal convinced Sir Stuart Bayley of inaction of Government of India, in not

forcing Maharaja of Sikkim to come to Darjeeling and vacating Lingtu would soon force pro British Lepcha faction to surrender before Tibetan authorities. This failure of Government of India was highly resented by British subjects in India as well as in England, especially by the traders, whose business prospects were at stake. These fears compelled Lord Dufferin to decide, vacation of Lingtu without any delay.

Knowing India's decision to use force if necessary for the vacation of Lingtu, Walsham, first informed Tsungli Yamen about Tibet's aggression on Lingtu and also apprised the future action of government of India. Tsungli Yamen requested Walsham that nothing decisive can be done unless report from Lhasa is received. Walsham was requested to persuade government of India, pending amicable settlement, to postpone its decision to expel the Tibetans by force, since that might effect friendly relations.¹

Throughout the winter of 1887-88, the Yamen and the Chinese legation fought hard to delay the

1. Telegram of Walsham to Salisbury.

expulsion of the Tibetans. Chinese legation was pleading that, its government has sent the Amban to secure the withdrawal of Tibetan forces. In view of these requests the Viceroy deferred the action till 15th March, 1888.

PAUL'S DEPUTATION TO SIKKIM

Government of Bengal deputed A.W. Paul, the Commissioner of Bengal, to visit Sikkim in order to assess the situation in the state and beyond its northern frontier, and also induce the Maharaja to return to his country. Besides the visit intended to boost the morals of Pro British faction. Maharaja returned to his kingdom in December, 1887.

In 1887, the Government of India, warned, the Tibetan Military office at Lingtu, that British forces would occupy that place if it is not vacated by 15th March, 1888. Knowing about the threat, the Chinese legation at London, requested Lord Salisbury, the British foreign secretary to postpone the military expedition, as New Chinese Amban is on his way to Lhasa. The proposed expedition was not postponed, but the Chinese authorities were assured, that Tibet would not be attacked unless, British forces are attacked by Tibet.¹

GENERAL GRAHAM'S EXPEDITION, 1888

In March 1888, a force of about 2,000 men under the command of General Graham took the field. A.W. Paul and J.G. White, an Executive Engineer of Bengal Service were attached to its political and Assistant Political Officer respectively.

The force encountered little opposition and on 21st March, 1888 it took Lingtu after a brief clash with Tibetans. This was the first time Tibetans had clashed with the army of a western power and they were badly defeated by the disciplined and well-equipped British-Indian Army. They were, however not dismayed by the British show of force. Exactly two months after their expulsion from Lingtu, on 21st May, 1888, they made a surprise attack on British position at a place called Gnatong in Sikkim and nearly succeeded in capturing, Sir Stuart Baylay who happened to be there at that time. The attack was repulsed with a heavy loss to Tibetans, Graham wanted to advance across the border into Tibet, but the government refused to give him necessary permission.¹

1. Telegram of Dufferin to Walsham, 11th Feb, 1888, F.S.E.Feb.

The news of Tibetan defeat caused considerable alarm in China. The Chinese legation in London made enquiries with the British foreign office whether Dufferin had ordered the Indian army to cross the Tibetan frontiers as was alleged in 'The Times' of 24th May, 1888, the Chinese were, however, assured that Indian army would not enter the Tibetan territory unless attacked by Tibetans.¹ After the attack on Gnatong all remained quiet on the frontier. The government of India informed Tibet that it was prepared to consider any friendly overtures the latter may desire to make. Tibet, however, ignored all such feelers.

The defeat of Tibetans resulted in a slight change in the attitude of leaders of Tibetan faction towards the Government of India. They became more submissive to the British government than they were before. Barmik Kazi, a leader of Pro-Tibetan faction, voluntarily submitted his dispute with Ralong monastery to the decision of Paul.

1. Telegram of Viceroy to Secretary of State,
28th May, 1888.

FINAL DEFEAT OF TIBETANS:

In September, 1888, the Tibetans were found to be concentrating their army near Gnatong. Therefore, General Graham made an attack and pushed them across the border on 26th Sept., 1888, he advanced into Chumbi valley, but he vacated it the next day.¹

Soon after the expulsion of the Tibetans from Gnatong, a small force of British Indian army entered Gangtok. This measure alarmed Maharaja. He fled to Chumbi, but was siezed by British army which had occupied that area for one day on 26th Sept., 1888. Though he was asked to return to his kingdom, his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal and his half brother Thinley Namgyal were allowed to remain in Tibet.

The real reason for marching the troops to Gangtok was to reassert the British position in Sikkim which became critical by Sept., 1888. The Tibetan faction re-asserted itself and there was complete collapse of the leading men of British faction. Colonel Mitchell, an Officer attached to the Expeditionary forces, felt that as a political

move, the marching of troops to the capital of Sikkim has had a beneficial affect.¹

The defeat of Tibetans was severe and British power was shown in unmistakable terms to the Maharaja of Sikkim and his people. The government of India felt that "all along the northern border, not only in Sikkim and Tibet, but also in Bhutan and Nepal, the events of the last few years will have an Excellent effect".

The Maharaja on his return threw himself on the clemency of the government of India explaining that his flight was caused by fear and had advice of those around him. Paul advised him to go to Darjeeling and make personal submission to the Lt. Governor of Bengal, but the latter decided that the Maharaja need not come to Darjeeling but remain at Gangtok.

The Lt. Governor's decision not to receive the Maharaja was based on the fear that it might

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1. Quoted in Overseas Expeditions: No. 34, P.61.
 2. Letter of govt. of India to Secretary of State, No. 40.

be represented by Tibetans and Chinese that the Maharaja had been taken off as a prisoner by the British. He feared that it might lead to a further procrastination on the part of the Tibetans or possibly even to the Amban's delaying his journey to the frontier in order to ascertain what had actually happened.

NEGOTIATIONS:

The defeat of Tibet convinced China, that if it does not negotiate with Indian government, it might loose the influence in Tibet. Chinese Amban at Lhasa, Shen-Tai was asked to proceed to the Tibet-Sikkim frontier to open negotiation. Amban arrived at Gnatong and the talks began on 21st December, 1888.¹

Talks from the very beginning was leading towards the failure, due adamant attitudes of the government of India as well as of China. The British government adhered to :-

- (1) Acceptance of British India's sovereignty over Sikkim.
- (2) Not to open any discussion on Sikkim-Tibet boundary issue.

- (3) Government of India would not recognize the existence of any foreign rights or influence within the state (Sikkim).

As regards the sovereignty over Sikkim, China accepted the de-facto sovereignty of British India, on the condition, that Maharaja of Sikkim would continue to send tributes to Grand Lama of Tibet & he should be allowed to wear hat and button conferred on him by Chinese government.¹

China did not accept the treaty negotiated between India and Tibet, pleading that Tibet has no right to negotiate any treaty without the permission of China.

Government of India did not accept China's conditions, instead it proposed certain concessions to Chinese. These were :-

- (1) Question of trade facilities, with Tibet would be separately discussed.
- (2) Maharaja would be allowed to wear the hat & the button.
- (3) Maharaja would be allowed to send suitable letters and presents to Buddhist Church in Tibet.

1. Durand's Memorandum on the negotiations with Ambah.

- (4) Maharaja would be allowed to send the letters to Amban, purely complimentary in nature, which should not be couched in the language of an inferior addressing a superior.

Government of India was not sure of acceptance of the above proposal by China. As the Amban's attitude was quite threatening. The Amban told Durand, that in the event of failure of negotiation war might breakout between China and British India. Replying in the same vein Durand said, the war will be decided in China not in India. Negotiation could not solve any problem. It was decided by Durand that India should occupy Phari and enforce the settlement on Tibet. Once Phari is occupied, China would come to its knees. Meanwhile Maharaja should be removed to British territory his respect to Amban does not bear any good result on Sikkim.

EXTERMENT OF MAHARAJA:³

Acting on the advice of Durand Maharaja and his family, was removed to Kalimpong, and he

was prohibited to visit Chumbi. J.C. White was appointed the Political officer of Sikkim to look into the administration of the state.

Chinese were quite uneasy at these developments and wanted to resume the talks. Government of India was not anxious to re-open the negotiation lest China should accept all the conditions laid down by the Government of India, but on the advice of British Minister at Peking the talks were resumed in April, 1889, between A.W. Paul and Jan Hord, the British and Chinese representatives respectively.

It was decided during the negotiation that China would accept, India's freehand in Sikkim and also would not use influence on Tibet to disturb Indo-Sikkim relations. But on the issue of 'Letters and presents' China was adamant and for the Government of India, it was a prestige issue. Hence the negotiation was dropped.

CONVENTION OF MARCH, 1890

Negotiations was reopened between India and China and a convention was signed at Calcutta on March 17, 1890 between India and China known as Sikkim-Tibet Convention of 1890 with the following provisions:-

- (1) Convention accepted Government of India's control over the internal and external affairs of Sikkim.
- (2) Boundary between Sikkim-Tibet was placed at the watershed of Tista river.
- (3) Joint Anglo-Chinese guarantee of the Sikkim-Tibet frontier.
- (4) The question of trade, posturage communication between the Government of India and Tibetan Government were reserved for further discussions.¹

WEAKNESSES OF THE CONVENTION:-

- (1) Tibet neither signed the convention nor approved of it.
- (2) The second weakness was the failure of China to realize that it was not in a position to enforce the convention on Tibet.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P-104.

Besides the weaknesses of the convention, the greatest achievement of the convention was that it re-established the legal status of Sikkim which was questioned by Tibet as is discussed in the previous chapter. Durand very clearly emphasized that -

"Sikkim is a part of the Indian Empire.....
it can have no dealings with the foreign power to whose eyes India should be all red from Himalayas to Cape Camorin."¹

TRADE REGISTRATION ACT, 1893

Government of India was keen to materialise the articles of the convention of 1890, hence wanted China, to settle down the matters relating to posturage, communication and export of Indian tea to Tibet. China found no difficulty in settling the question of posturage and communication but was much disturbed regarding the establishment of trade mart in Tibet. Government of India wanted the mart at Phari, near Ihasa, Bhutan border, which Tibet was not willing

1. Durand's Official note dated 21st May, 1889 a-s mentioned in 'India & Sikkim' : P R Rao: P.105

to permit. To avoid further annoyance to China Government of India agreed to open trade mart at Yatung. Over another question of importation of Indian tea in Tibet China was not willing to permit, on the contrary wanted Chinese brick tea to be exported to Sikkim, which could never be accepted by India. Thereupon a compromise formula was reached by India and China, that after five years of signing of the trade agreement, "Indian tea may be imported into Tibet at the same rate of duty as the Chinese tea into England."¹ On 5th December, 1893, regulations regarding trade communication and posturage, generally known as the trade Regulation act of 1893 was signed at Darjeeling by A.W. Paul for the Government of India and by James Hart and Ho Chang Jung for China.

PROVISIONS OF THE CONVENTION:-

Art. 1 : Yatung was declared a trade mart.

Art. 2: British subjects were granted liberty to travel freely to and fro between Sikkim-Tibet frontier and Yatung.

1. Sikkim: The story of Integration : S R Shukla: P-236-37..

Art. 3: Import and export of arms, ammunition and military stores, salt liquor, intoxicating and Narcotic drugs were prohibited.

Art. 4: Trade in other goods was to be duty free for the first five years from the date of opening of the mart, but after that period it may be imported into the country at a rate not exceeding that at which Chinese tea was to be imported into England.

Art. 5: Goods passing through the mart were to be examined and registered at its custom house.

Art. 6: All the trade disputes arising in Yatung were to be settled in personal conference of the Chinese frontier officer and British political officer for Sikkim.

Art. 7: Despatches from the Government of India to the Amban were to be handed over to the Chinese frontier officer.

Art. 8: Despatch from the government of China to the Government of India.

Art. 9: Under article 9 Government of India was given liberty to deal with Tibetan herdsmen

who came to graze their cattle in Sikkim-Tibet frontier area, according to the law prevalent in India.

Trade Regulation Act of 1893 had weaknesses as convention of 1890 had. Though trade Regulation act was mainly concerned with Tibet, but the consent of Tibet was not obtained. Hence the main purpose which the pact was signed could not be fulfilled. These weaknesses were responsible for the subsequent difficulties of the Government of India with Tibet.

RECOGNITION OF SIDKEONG NAMGYAL AS THE
SUCCESSOR OF BRITISH THRONE-EXHIBITION
OF BRITISH SUZERAINITY OVER S I K K I M

Maharaja of Sikkim Thotab Namgyal's movements were restricted by the British Government, when he disobeyed the Government of India and showed his sympathies to Amban, immediately one year after signing the convention of 1890. He was asked to call his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal who was studying in Tibet. When Ma-haraja refused to do so and tried to escape to Tibet through Walong pass at Nepal - Tibet border, he was arrested by Nepal officials

and handed over to British Indian Government afterwards he was interned in a monastery of Darjeeling.

Maharaja was first persuaded and then was threatened to call his eldest son from Tibet, as the British government never wanted that Maharaja's son should grow up in anti-British atmosphere during his formative period. Maharaja under any circumstances refused to call him back, on the ground that it would hinder his studies.

George Elliot, the Commissioner of Bengal ultimately decided to depose Maharaja temporarily for three years, as it would have psychological impact on Maharaja, to call back his eldest son, or Tchoda Namgyal might himself come lest he might loose the opportunity to accede to the throne as natural successor, because British government decided to impart education to younger son Sidkeong Namgyal in Hindi and English and two monks were called from Sikkim to train him in religion.¹ Acting on the suggestion of George Elliot, the Government of India temporarily deposed Maharaja for 3 years, from July, 1892. However the formal announcement was

withheld as it might provoke excitement or attract attention.

Tchoda Namgyal when contacted refused to come back from Tibet. Government of India was in a fix what to do. J C White was so much against Maharaja that he never wanted to restore him to the Sikkim throne. George Elliot was thinking that accession of younger son Sidekeong Namgyal is not easy as he is regarded ~~the~~ Avatar of Sidekeong Namgyal, the founder of Phodang monastery. He felt that succession of an Avatari Lama cannot be accepted by different monasteries. Ultimately it was decided that Thotab Namgyal should be restored if he agrees to accept the new constitution for Sikkim. Under the new constitution Sikkim was to be ruled not by Maharaja alone but with the help of a council consisting of Lamas and Laymen. If Maharaja deferred with council on any point, the matter was to be referred to the Political Officer, and if he agreed with the Maharaja the council was bound to yield. The decision of the council was to be carried out in the joint names of Maharaja and council. Maharaja accepted the new constitution.

and was restored in November, 1895.

After a long discussion among the British officials themselves, the will of White prevailed and it was decided that Sidekeong Namgyal would succeed his father. This is to be noted here that once again the Government of India proved its sovereignty over Sikkim by placing the person of ~~his~~ own choice on the throne. No lama of any monastery could speak against the decision of the British official.¹ It was Edgar who decided the fate of Sidekeong Namgyal, he never wanted any person of Tibetan proclivities, should accede to the Sikkim throne.

Maharaja Thotab Namgyal appealed to the Government of India to reconsider its decision, as an avatari lama is not eligible to discharge the temporal duties. Government of India rejected the Maharaja's appeal. Since it felt, "to allow the eldest son to return to Sikkim just after he had been disinherited would be to court intrigues."

After his recognition the successor designate was sent to England for higher studies. Kumar rendered valuable services to government of India, he personally supervised the construction of road in Lachen Valley.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P.119.

ERECTION OF BOUNDARY PILLARS:-

Once the question for the succession of Sikkim throne was solved, J C White, the Political Officer in Sikkim, decided to visit the Sikkim-Tibet frontier area to promote the cause of British trade. In May, 1894 he went to Yatung in Tibetan frontier area, to attend the opening of trade mart (which was to be opened under the trade Regulation Act of 1893). He found the site of the mart exceedingly badly chosen, and wanted that it should be removed lower down the valley to some other place near Rinchingong.

It seems the place for the mart was chosen by Tibetans willingly as they never wanted that British Indian citizens should be allowed to move inside the Tibetan frontier. To safeguard their interest Tibetan soldiers were stationed in the neighbouring frontier area. White informed these developments to the Government of India through Government of Bengal. Viceroy Lord Elgin wrote a letter to Chinese Amban of Lhasa drawing his attention to the reported occupation of certain places in Sikkim by Tibetans. He suggested to him that

officials of both the governments should travel together along the frontier to get acquainted with the actual boundary line.¹

Amban replied that Chinese and Tibetan representative would inspect the border between Sikkim and Tibet as defined by the convention of 1890 and to make a careful examination in order that "the boundary pillars may be erected which shall forever be respected by either side."²

7th May, 1895 was fixed when representative of British India, Tibet and China were to meet at Pemaringo pass and commence the demarcation.

Tibetan delegation did not turn up at all, while Chinese representative reached 10 days later than it was scheduled. When asked about the absence of Tibetan representatives, he could not furnish any satisfactory reason and requested to delay the demarcation. White declared the request

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1. Letter of Elgin to Kwei Hwean, the Chinese Amban at Lhasa, 9th August, 1894, E S E, Oct., 1894 as mentioned in "India and Sikkim" P R Rao: P-125.
 2. Letter of Kwei Hwean to Elgin, 4th October, 1894 E.S.E. January, 1895, 247.

On the next day i.e. on 19th May, White fixed the boundary pillars at the Jelep Pass in the presence of Mayor Tu (Chinese Representative). After erection of the pillar White and Tu agreed to meet again on 1st June at Doka Pass and in the meantime White should erect a pillar at Donchuk Pass which the Chinese would examine afterwards. After erection of pillars Jelep Pass, White received a letter from Amban with a request that demarcation should be postponed for sometime to 'avoid trouble', as the Lamas of three Tibetan monastries of Sera Drepung and Gaden were full of suspicion.¹ White replied that as the work of demarcation is already begun, it cannot be stopped.

Destruction of Boundary Pillars:

Erection of boundary pillars was not intelligent slip. Once, the issue of erection of pillars was taken, it became prestige issue for British Government to complete. But the action was opposed by Tibet. They were quite sentimental about traditional boundary and wanted to maintain it.

1. Letter of Kwei Hwean to White, 14th May, 1895, E.s.E. July, 1895, 138.

It started a long chain of exchange of fruitless communication. Meanwhile in 1895, China was defeated by Japan and 13th Dalai Lama came to power in Tibet, who was inclined towards Russia to get Russian help to liberate Tibet. This caused anxiety amongst British Government and they for time being forgot the erection of boundary pillars and started demanding trade mart at Phari, to keep Tibetans under their influence to check Russian expansion.

Hence Lord Curzon who became the new Governor - General in 1899, adopted a new policy towards Tibet.

:CURZON'S POLICY TOWARDS TIBET:

Lord Curzon took over charge of Governor General in 1899. He was a man of unending energy & much interested in formulating foreign policy. He wanted to settle all the matters relating boundary questions. Tibet was his prime concern. His policy towards Tibet was guided by Russia-Phoebia, because in 1895 Russia had defeated China and was advancing in Central Asia towards Tibet. Secondly 13th Dalai Lama came under the influence of Buryat Monk, who was residing in Russia, Dalai Lama was invited by Czar of Russia.¹ This caused great anxiety in the

1. The Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullik, Published by Allied Publishers : Page-28.

hearts of British policy makers. Though India's northern boundary was traditionally treated as secured because of high and impenetrable mountains, but Russian advances has charged the situation. Lord Curzon warned, those who wanted to maintain the status quo, and never wanted to disturb China, that "India is like a fortress, with the vast moat of sea on two of her faces and with mountains on her walls for remainder, but beyond these walls which are sometimes of by no means insuperable heights and admit of being easily penetrated, extend a glacis of varying breadth and dimension. We do not want to occupy it but we also cannot afford to see it occupied by our foes. We are quite content to let it remain in the hands of our allies and friends, but if rivals creeps up to it and lodge themselves right under our walls, we are compelled to intervene because a danger would thereby grow up which might oneday menace our security..... He would be a short - sighted Commander who merely manned his ramparts in India and did not look beyond.¹

1. India's China War : Neville Maxwell : P-21.

Curzon wanted to create a chain of independent states between Russia and India so that India may not directly come in way of Russian expansionism. Hence Britain accepted Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, because they thought Tibet under Chinese suzerainty is better than a weak Tibet. Moreover Britain wanted friendly relations with China to keep Russia away. For this policy of appeasement with China Shahidulla south of Kuen Lun and North of Karakoram, so far under the control of Kashmir was given to China. Thus China, knowing weakness of Britain started demanding more and more territory in south of Siukiong.¹

It is due to Chinese pressure that question of establishing trade mart could not be solved to the satisfaction of both the parties i.e. India and Tibet. British Government at London was not in favour of any strict action against China as it was involved to contain Russian expansion in Europe. Lord Curzon tried twice to contact Dalai Lama to solve the dispute pertaining, the erection of boundaries and opening of trade mart, but in vain.

1. The Chinese Betrayal: B N Mullik : P-88.

Therefore Curzon informed Lord Hamilton, Secretary of State for India that the only feasible alternative to send White to tour along the Sikkim-Tibet boundary as laid down in the convention, to erect pillars wherever necessary, or to evict Tibetans from Giagong or elsewhere on the British side of the border or exact small tax from them. He felt that if the Tibetans chose to resist the progress of the Political Officer or destroy the pillars erected by him or endeavour to assert their claims to Giagong, "they would have themselves to thank for any collision that might ensue."¹ Curzon recommended the occupation of the Chumbi valley of the Tibetans maintain their hostility even after their expulsion from Giagong. He complained of the impossibility of holding direct communication with Lhasa as "the most extraordinary anachronism of the 20th century. Hamilton permitted Curzon to expel Tibetans from Giagong but advised him not to cross border in any event. Subsequently Giagong was evacuated.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P-138.

Curzon wanted that no longer China should be regarded as having suzerainty over Tibet. In a letter despatched to London he said Chinese suzerainty over Tibet is a constitutional fiction, and that Amban at Lhasa was not the Viceroy of Tibet, but the Ambassador of China. He believed that all the efforts of the Government of India to open direct communication with Dalai Lama had failed because of the intervention of the third party i. e. China. He therefore wanted that they should send a mission to Lhasa in which a properly qualified representative should take part instead of an "obs-cure junta" masked by Chinese Amban. He felt that time was suitable for such talks since for the first time for over a century, there was a Dalai Lama, "who is neither an infant nor a puppet". Curzon wanted that negotiation with Tibet should cover not merely the small question of Sikkim frontier, but the entire question of our future relations, commercial and otherwise with Tibet, and the negotiation should culminate in the appointment of permanent British representative, consular or diplomatic, to

reside at Lhasa. To secure the mission against a possible Tibetan attack, Curzon proposed that the mission should be accompanied by an armed escort. He further said that "Tibet should be forced to look to us (Government of India) for protection and **support** and place no reliance on distant powers like China and Russia. Any laxity on the part of India would throw Tibet in the fold of China & Russia. To secure these objectives Curzon send an expedition under young Husband to Tibet, to secure international recognition for Sikkim as **protecto-**rate of India.

Mission reached Rinchinpong on 13th December, 1903, after crossing Jelep La. Besides objections raised by Tibetan Commander, Mission further proceeded to Gyantse and waited for Tibetan delegation, which never turned up, rather expedition was attacked by Tibetan soldiers. On being attacked Young Husband ordered mission to further proceed to Lhasa and sent an ultimatum to Lhasa demanding the appearance of the Amban and the Tibetan delegates before 25th June, 1904. The Ultimatum was ignored & the expedition entered Lhasa on 4th August, 1904. The Dalai Lama fled to Urga, the Capital of Mangolia. Thereupon Yu Tai, the Chinese Amban agreed for talks.

LHASA CONVENTION¹

On September 7, 1904 a convention was signed between great Britain and Tibet, known as Lhasa convention. The provisions of the convention are as follows:-

Art. 1 : Tibet agreed to recognize the Sikkim frontier as laid down in the 1890 convention and the erection of boundary pillars.

Art. 2 : To open Gyantse and Gartok as trade marts.

Art. 3 : To discuss subsequently the question of the amendment of the Trade Regulations of 1893.

Art. 3 : Not to levy duties except those provided for in the mutually agreed tariff.

Art. 5 : To keep the roads open to the new marts & to transmit letters between the British trade agent and the Chinese and Tibetan authorities.

Art. 6 : To pay an indemnity of Rs. 75,00,000/- in 75 instalments.

Art. 7 : To place Chumbi valley under British occupation as a security for the payment of indemnity.

Art. 8 : To raze all fortifications between the British frontier and Gyantse.

Art. 9 : And not to have any kind of dealings with foreign powers without the British consent.

1. Sikkim : The story of integration : S R Shukla:P-239

The British Government considered indemnity terms to be severe. Therefore it agreed to evacuate Chumbi Valley in three years provided the indemnity was paid and the convention was observed in other respect. Lhasa Convention could not be regarded as final as China did not give its consents, which was essential because Britain recognized Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. Therefore, an other convention was signed between Great Britain and China on April 27, 1906, known as Peking convention. China gave its formal sanction to the Lhasa convention and Britain agreed not to annex Tibet. China agreed not to allow other foreign states to interfere in Tibet's internal affairs. Britain received the right to connect the trade marts with India by telegraph lines. Sikkim convention of 1890 and Trade Regulation Act of 1893 remained in force.

Curzon dropped the idea of erecting the pillars as it was physically impossible and there was a possibility that Tibetans might knock it down, a situation Government of India very much wanted to avoid.

In 1906, the administration of Sikkim was transferred from the Bengal Government to the Government of India. In 1914 when British Government was involved in first world war and was unable to pay full attention to the administration of Sikkim, the autonomy of Sikkim was restored and Sir Tashi Namgyal became the ruler of Sikkim.¹ British Government was highly pleased with his behaviour. He was pro-British as he received all his education under British supervision. His broad outlook and modern thinking brought out many reforms in the state. Lord Linlithgow paid a visit to Sikkim in 1938 to assess the British influence in Sikkim, which never declined till Britain ruled India.

1. India and Sikkim : P R Rao : P-144.

C H A P T E R - I V

LAPSE OF BRITISH PARAMOUNTCY AND
IMPACT OF SIKKIM

India's independence was bound to have repercussions on the tiny state of Sikkim, because of closer ties between the two.

The British Government maintained that after the 15th of August, 1947, British paramountcy over the Indian states would automatically lapse, and that the Princes would be free, either to join the Indian Union or Pakistan or to remain Independent. The memorandum submitted by the Cabinet Mission to the organization of States, Chamber of Princes which was later reiterated by the British Government on 3rd June, 1947, said, "Thus as a logical sequence and in view of the desires expressed to them on behalf of the Indian states. His Majesty's Government will cease to exercise the powers of paramountcy. This means that the rights of the states which flow from their relationship to the crown, will no longer exist, and that all the rights surrendered by the states to the paramount power will return to the states".¹

1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan: Page-91.

Lapse of paramountcy would have unleashed many dangers, to threaten India's integrity. In the words of V P Menon, "The general tendency among the rulers was, to make the best of the bargaining, in which the lapse of paramountcy had placed them. The fact that during the Second World War many of the major states had strengthened their armed forces, could not be ignored. The decision therefore, that, with the withdrawal of the British, the Indian States comprising two fifths of the land must return to a state of complete political independence, was fraught with the greatest danger to the integrity of the country, and so the prophets of gloom predicted that "the ship of Indian freedom would founder on the rock of the states,"¹ This was the situation, where Sikkim found itself after the lapse of British paramountcy. Whether Sikkim was like other native states of India or had some different position, is a controversial question.

British Government had provided special status to Sikkim, but this did not prevent Sikkim to come under the purview of the Government of India Act 1935.

1. The Himalayan Gateway: George Kotturan : P-91.

Actually this act enable Sikkim to have one seat in the council of States of Federal Assembly.¹

An old British Officer, Olaf Caroe, Secretary in the External Affairs Department of the Government of India, under Lord Linlithgow and Lord Wavell, wrote, "This protectorate status does not alter the fact that for decades prior to 1947, Sikkim had been a part of India, its external frontiers being a sector of India's frontiers".

To clarify it further Sir Olaf Caroe said, the Indian Government representative in Sikkim was a political Officer, equivalent to a resident and not an ambassador.

This shows that for all practical purposes British Government treated Sikkim at par with other Indian states. At the time of lapse of paramountcy there seem to be two forces working in the opposite directions. The peasantry which was groaning under feudalism for centuries, inspired by democratic struggle of Mahatma Gandhi, thought at the right moment to organize themselves to overthrow

1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan : P.92.

the tyrannical rule of Chogyal and his caucus. Hence this resulted in the birth of many political parties. In the initial stages, these political parties were neither well knit, nor they had any definite social, political and economic programme. The common dislike for Chogyal had brought them together. On December 5, 1947, a well-organized political party Sikkim State Congress, headed by Tashi Tshering came into existence with the three fold objectives i.e. (1) abolition of Land lordism, (2) Formation of popular Ministry (3) Paving way for the Sikkim's merger with India.¹

On the other hand Maharaj Kumar Palden Thondup Namgyal (later Chogyal) met the Chamber of Princes, as he was the member of this organization. Maharaj Kumar wanted to know the attitudes of the other states towards free India. He could not get any definite answer as the Princes themselves were in disarray.

However Maharaj Kumar after long persuasion succeeded in getting assurances from leaders in Delhi, a special status to Sikkim. Although such status was

I. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan: Page-94.

denied to anyother hill state. It might be due to the strategic importance of Sikkim. Why Sikkim was given special status is reflected in Nehru's words, who, while moving a resolution on Sikkim in Constituent Assembly on January 22, 1947, said "Sikkim is an Indian state but different from others."¹

The resolution adopted by Constituent Assembly reads, "The Assembly resolves that the Committee constituted by its resolution of 21st December, 1946 (to confer with the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes and with other representatives of Indian states for certain specified purposes) shall in addition have power to confer with such persons, as the committee thinks fit, for the purpose of examining the special problems of Bhutan and Sikkim and to report to the Assembly the result of such examinations."²

Sikkim alongwith Cooch Bihar was allotted a seat in the Constituent Assembly (together because Rajas of both the states were Tibetan in origin)

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1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan: P.91.
 2. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan: P.93.

This shows Sikkim had no special status but it is a mystery how Sikkim could circumvent to indomitable Sardar Patel and got the Indian Government to agree to a standstill agreement which was signed on 27th of February, 1948.

This agreement was temporary in nature because future relations with Sikkim was to be decided in cordial and cool atmosphere not in haste.

According to this agreement, "All agreements, relations and administrative arrangements as to the matters of common concern existing between the crown and the Sikkim state on August 14, 1947" were deemed to continue between the government of India and Sikkim, pending the conclusion of a new treaty. Thus it ensured the continuation of the status quo in matters of common interest like defence, external affairs, communication and currency.

The standstill agreement aroused many questions and clarifications. B V Keskar, the deputy Minister of external affairs and commonwealth relations explained this position thus, "With regard to

1. The Himalayan Gateway: George Kotturan: P-94.

Sikkim, in many matters it stands independently, not exactly but as a state within India but an independent state".

Despite Standstill Agreement between the government of India and Maharaja of Sikkim, the political scene in Sikkim was becoming quite restive. Encouraged by the successful establishment of popular government in India, the people in Sikkim strove for the same object and formed various political parties to reach their destination. The growth and development of various political activities in Sikkim would be discussed later.

EMERGENCE OF VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES:

The various political parties emerged in Sikkim based on different social and economic interest of the different communities of Sikkim.

Economic imbalance under feudal system in Sikkim resulted in great dissatisfaction amongst the people. The economic disparity in three communities was quite marked. Bhutia owned the best lands, and controlled the business and urban property. The Lepchas mostly confined to Dongzu area in their 'ancestral -

home' lived in utter poverty despite their rich cardamom growing lands. The Nepalese were agriculturist with limited land rights and were mostly sharecroppers. The biggest imbalance was that, almost half the land of Sikkim was owned by Maharaja and his family as private estates. Most of it consisted of cardamom growing areas and rich forests which gave substantial income. He also had fairly large share in urban property besides his other business interests within and outside Sikkim. Out of revenue budget of forty million rupees for Sikkim in 1973, one tenth of it was spent on the privy purse and Palace Bodyguards. Use of public funds for the benefit of ruler and his family was quite evident. Besides the rulers and his family, Kazis, patronized by Maharaja were controlling the economy of the state. All communities were affected by the role of Kazis and consequently aroused their hostility towards these people. Kazi Ihendup Dorji was one of the exceptions, who joined hands with the suppressed people and raised the banner of revolt against the Maharaja. So the economic, religious and linguistic problems combined together to cause great resentment, and the people of Sikkim from various ethnic

groups stood in revolt against the ruler and this resulted in the formation of the three prominent political parties:- Praja Sudharak Samaj at Gangtok, Praja Sammelan at Tmi Tarku and Praja Mandal at Chakhung. These parties ultimately merged and formed a new party the Sikkim State Congress, with Tashi Tshering the most popular leader at the moment, as its President.¹

The Sikkim State Congress raised three main demands:-

- (1) Abolition of landlordism.
- (2) Formation of an interim Government as a necessary precursor of popular and democratic govt.
- (3) Accession of Sikkim to Indian Union.

The demands of S.S.C. were becoming popular day by day. Maharaja could not resist the pressure for a long time and he had to restrict the powers of the landlords. He also agreed to accept the nominees of S.S.C. who could function as his secretaries. Demand for accession to Indian Union was kept in abeyance.

Agitation caused much concern to the Durbar and ultimately the Durbar had to give warning to the agitators that "incitement and other gravely objectionable activities which are calculated to create

1. State Govt. & Politics-Sikkim: N Sengupta: P-8

class hatred and ill-feeling and otherwise to foment troubles between classes and communities of His Highness's subjects are offences of gravest nature in which some irresponsible persons have freely indulged". It is also stated that, "The Sikkim Durbar has already taken steps for welfare of the masses in keeping with the traditions and circumstances of the country, and other measures are under active consideration of the Durbar. Violent agitation at this time would only be obstructive & destructive in its effect and tend unnecessarily to stir up strife and hatred between classes and communities of His Highness's subjects leading to disorder and administrative difficulties.¹

To counter the measures of S.S.C. Chogyal patronized the emergence of Sikkim National Party, which virtually was an antithesis of S.S.C. It was avowedly a party of vested interests with communal overtones favouring the Bhutia Elite, and its sole purpose was to disrupt the movement for the democratisation of the administration in the state.

1. State Government & Politics- Sikkim: N Sengupta: p-8.

Its leadership openly expressed itself against such issues of common interest, as abolition of landlordism and also advent of democracy, saying that it was a luxury which a small state like Sikkim could ill afford. It also expressed itself against the demand for accession of the state to India. The nature and purpose of this party is evident from the resolution it passed on April 30, 1948. It read:-

- (a) Historically, socially, culturally and linguistically Sikkim has closer affinities with Bhutan and Tibet.
- (b) From geographical and ethnic point of view, Sikkim is not a part of India. She has only political relations with the latter, which were imposed on her.
- (c) From the religious point of view, being a Lamaist, she is quite distinct from India.¹

In the end, the resolution declared, "The policy of the party is to maintain intact by all means the indigenous character of Sikkim and to pressure its integrity. The party would make all out efforts

1. Sikkim - the story of Integration : S C Shukla:
P-49.

to establish a separate entity and to remain outside the Indian Union. To force Sikkim to accede to the Indian Union, by direct or indirect means, would be a denial to Sikkim her right to stick to her natural affinities."

Just around them this time a third political party - Rajya Praja Sammelan also came into being. Its founders were D B Tiwari Chetri and Govardhan Pradhan, elder brother of Kashi Raj Pradhan. It declared about its objects complete union with India and closer association with Nepali population of Darjeeling and North Bengal.

The conflict between Sikkim State Congress and Sikkim National Party was growing and within very short period it became a conflict between Ruling class and common people. Tashi Tshering in his Pamphlet "Sikkim at the Crossroads" wrote - "with the power of administration, now practically in their hands, the leading landlords lost no time in asserting themselves. They had lost much ground during the British regime & they were now understandably inspired by a desire to make a headway and if possible, regain their former position as feudal lords. Although they were mere

handful, they constituted the majority of the state council and were in a position to lord it over the rest. The ambition of the landlords naturally conflicted with the interest of the people who, however were helpless against such formidable opponents.¹

Demand for abolition of landlordism and establishment of popular government was gradually increasing. An extraordinary meeting of the Sikkim state Congress held at Namchi, in west Sikkim on 22nd, Oct. 1948, where thousands of people from all walks of life had gathered defying the direct and indirect threats from government and all sorts of propoganda against the S.S.C. whose leaders were branded as "Indian agents out to sell their Motherland."

At this historic meeting the Congress reiterated party's demand for the establishment of People's Government, and abolition of landlordism. By another resolution, the demand for state's accession to India was reiterated and it was decided that a delegation of the Party with President and General Secretary would meet the leaders of the Indian National Congress.

1. Sikkim at the Cross Roads : Tashi Tshering :

Accordingly in December, 1948 Tashi Tshering and C.D. Rai visited Delhi and met Prime Minister, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru who assured them that the people's will must prevail.

A year passed and no demand of S.S.C. was fulfilled except the appointment of three secretaries to advise Maharaja, one of whom turned renegade and formed National Party. Thus status quo ante was restored. Therefore once again the S.S.C. mobilised its forces and held a big meeting on the occasion of its annual conference at Rangpo in Feb., 1949 and gave a call to launch, "No rent and No tax" campaign. The conference concluded on February 6, and two days later six of its leaders including C. D. Rai were arrested while Tashi Tshering avoided his arrest by confining himself to the forewalls of his house ready to pounce upon anybody crossing his threshold. He was fully armed and kept his tempo high by frequent bouts of Scotch.

Meanwhile the arrest of the Congress leaders had surcharged the whole atmosphere and apprehending widespread disorders curfew was imposed on Gangtok.

Despite the curfew a mammoth procession of more than five thousand of people was brought out in City on 9th February to protest against the government action. During this period Harishwar Dayal, the Political Officer was in constant touch with Sikkim Durbar and on the advice of Political Officer Tashi Tshering was not arrested and arrested leaders were also released. This was the major victory for S.S.C.¹

Government of India was keen in the stability of Sikkim, what government of India wanted for Sikkim is evident from the speech of N V Gadgil, a Union Minister in the Parliament on behalf of Sardar Patel, that "it is clear however that in these states which remain separate units, there would be a continuous popular pressure for the grant of full responsible government. I hope the rulers of these states will appreciate the necessity of retaining the affection and goodwill of their subjects by timely concessions, rather than futile resistance to popular demands."²

It is evident that under any circumstances, India wanted a stable government in Sikkim. Towards achieving this goal the Indian government intended to cooperate

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1. Sikkim - the story of integration : S C Shukla : P-51
 2. State Govt. & Politics-Sikkim : N Sengupta : P-10.

more closely in bringing about the increading association of the Sikkimese people with their government. The Indian Deewan was duly appointed with this motive in mind. The Standstill Agreement was remain in force until a new agreement was signed. It was indicated in this Agreement that Sikkim would be a protectorate of India. Government of India would be responsible for its external relations, defence and communication. The state would continue to enjoy autonomy in the internal matters but the ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of good administration and law and order would be in hands of the Government of India. An officer of Government of India would continue to be Deewan of the state. But Government of India's policy was the progressive association of the people of the state with the government. It was proposed as a first step that an advising Council representative of all the people would be associated with the Deewan. Steps would also be taken immediately to institute a village Panchayat System on an elective bases within the state. This is an essential and effective process of education in the art of popular

Government. The intention of the government of India was that these Panchayats should in due course elect a council for the state whose functions and areas of responsibility would be progressively enlarged.¹

The above agreement could not satisfy the members of S.S.C. as it neither altered the position of the Maharaja nor established a popular government in Sikkim. For them autonomy of Sikkim meant the autonomy of the Maharaja.

Without any response to their popular demands by the Maharaja, the much exploited people of Sikkim, gathered, courage to demonstrate before the palace of Maharaja from early morning shouting "Prajā Tantra Zindabad, Inquilab Zindabad" (Gandhian influence of Satyagrah is obvious). Maharaja was out of wits to handle the situation. Political Officer, Harishwar Dayal had to intervene, and Maharaja was persuaded to agree to form a popular ministry soon. On his assurance, the demonstrating mob dispersed.²

1. Press Note - Ministry of External affairs, Govt. of India, dated 23rd March, 1959.

2. Sikkim - the story of integration : S R Shukla : P-52.

The first popular ministry in the history of Sikkim with three nominees of S.S.C. and two official nominees was formed on May 9, 1949, eight days after the Satyagraha, Mr Tashi Tshering was appointed the first Chief Minister of Sikkim.

The experiment however did not prove successful because there was no constitution, under which a ministry could function. The wishes of the Maharaja were low. The government officials were status quoist and paid little heed to the orders of the new ministry. Therefore there were frequent quarrels between the two, and thus main objective of the popular rule to give relief and redress to the people by abolition of landlordism and forced labour, were hamstrung in this tussle of power.

In course of time the relations between the Chief Minister and the Maharaja became so strained that Dr. B.V. Keskar, Deputy Minister for External affairs rushed to Gangtok. He was very cordially treated by the Maharaja to win his favour. He held talks with Maharaja, Maharaj Kumar, members of the National Party and S.S.C. He left Gangtok on May 27, without

any results but on reaching Delhi he submitted in his report, "The possibility of a breakdown of peace and order in the state" and recommended "taking over of administration". He wrote to the Maharaja that Political Officer might be appointed as Deewan, pending appointment of new Deewan. Thus the life of first ministry of Sikkim was scuttled.¹

On his recommendation, Government of India rushed one company of army on June 2. Subsequently on June 6, Dayal summoned all the five ministers to his office and bluntly told them that he was dismissing the ministry on the advice of the Government of India and taking over their administration of Sikkim himself as its Deewan.

The dismissal of ministry was so sudden and unexpected, that S.S.C. was shocked. "The men who entered the Residency as ministers with many hopes and aspirations returned crest fallen and disappointed as commoners. They apparently however expressed no grudge against India."²

1. Sikkim - the story of Integration: S R Shukla: P.53

2. Sikkim - the story of Integration: S R Shukla: P.53

They were more shocked at the changed behaviour of New Delhi. When they had visited Delhi last time in December, 1948, they had found the attitude of India quite cordial and receptive but in the present visit they were curtly told that - "Government of India's sole concern was to ensure a stable government, and no chaos and disorder would be tolerated.

This volte face Indian leadership completely disillusioned the Sikkim delegation and particularly its leader, Tashi Tshering, who felt deeply hurt and whose confidence in Indian leadership was profoundly shaken. On his return to Sikkim he charged the political Officer and Maharaja of "Secret alliance" against the people of Sikkim as a result of this collusion the ministry was wrongly dismissed. Dismissal of ministry by Harishwar Dayal made him very unpopular with S.S.C. Therefore his newly acquired status of Deewan of Sikkim did not last long, and on Aug. 11, 1949 J.S. Lall an I.C.S. took over charge from him with very wide powers exceeding even those of the first British Political Officer.

This new Political Officer realised the power of S.S.C. in course of time. The deteriorating economic condition due to no rent campaign launched by S.S.C. forced him to meet two S.S.C. leaders - Nayan Tshering Lapcha and C D Rai, and he had to accept two of their demands i.e. abolition of forced labour and house-tax.

INDO-SIKKIM TREATY OF 1950 AND
PROTECTORATE STATUS OF SIKKIM:

We have seen in the previous chapter what happened in Sikkim's political life just after India's independence. Maharaj Kumar and S.S.C. both wanted to take Sikkim in different directions, hence a conflict was inevitable. India was looking at these developments as a mute observer, till integrity of Sikkim was at stake. The Government of India under Nehru never wanted to intervene as he failed to realise the strategic implications at the moment, despite Sardar Patel's warning. Patel visualised a threat developing from China and the consequent importance of Bhutan & Sikkim to India. Nehru's idealism prevailed over his political judgement. He decided to maintain the status

1. The Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-10

quo vis a vis these kingdoms. Although the 1949 agitation by the S.S.C. against the ruler pointed to the new trends in Sikkimese politics, Delhi held the view that the posting of an Indian Deewan, as head of the administration would adequately meet the crisis, and went ahead with the signing of a treaty in 1950, returning Sikkimese status as a protectorate.

According to B.S.Das (Chief Executive of Sikkim) the new arrangement was a wrong step as under such an arrangement Maharaja emerged as the dominant personality which caused much complications in Sikkim's politics as well as in Indo-Sikkim relations.¹

The Government of India invited the Sikkim leaders for talks in New Delhi in March 1950. The talks covered the entire gamut of Indo-Sikkimese relations. After the conclusion of talks a press note was issued by the External Affairs Ministry which runs as follows.

The "discussions covered the entire field of future relations between Sikkim and India". A provisional agreement about necessary administrative arrangements in the state was reached including the association of popular representatives in the government

1. Sikkim: The story of Integration : S R Shukla: P-54.

of the state. As regards the future relationship of Sikkim with India, and decision has also been taken regarding the administration. The press-note further added "As regards the status of Sikkim, it has been agreed that Sikkim will continue to be a protectorate of India. The Government of India will continue to be responsible for its external relations.

"As regards the internal affairs, the government of the state will continue to enjoy autonomy subject to ultimate responsibility of the Government of India. For the present, an officer of the Government of India will continue to be the Deewan of the state. But the Government of India's policy is, one of progressive association of the people of the state with its government, a policy with which happily H H the Maharaja is in full agreement.

It is proposed, as a first step that an advisory council representative of all the interests should be associated with the Deewan".¹

On return from Delhi, the Deewan constituted an advisory council consisting of Tshering, Kashi Raj Pradhan, Capt. Dimik Singh, Gyalt Tshering and

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration: S R Shukla:P.55

Sonam Tshering, besides five other representatives from other interests like trade and commerce. Praja Sammelan however abstained from joining it on the ground of its improper composition.¹

The Ministry was conglomeration of diverse interest, hence it was bound to fail. No decision of the council could be implemented because of varied interests. Distribution of administrative powers amongst the members of different ethnic groups, also caused much tension and blockade in the functioning of the council. In such tense atmosphere election of Gram Panchayats were held.

The differences among S S C representatives had been so much widened that they boycotted the state banquet given by the Sikkim Durbar on the occasion of the signing of the Indo-Sikkim treaty on December 5, 1950. It was signed by Harishwar Dayal and Maharaja Tashipat at Gangtok.²

The Indo-Sikkim treaty containing thirteen articles, was more or less on the lines of External Affairs Ministry's note of March 20. Under it the

1 & 2 . Sikkim the story of Integration : S R Shukla :
P. 55

Government of India agreed to pay Sikkim Rs. 3 lakhs per annum. The terms of the treaty caused dismay in S.S.C. camp, as its leaders felt that the wishes of the people had been ignored and the government of India had gone all out to placate the Maharaja though with it had taken away some more powers from him. It was also alleged that the Government of India had come to some secret understanding.¹

It was felt that Government of India was trying to please Maharaja, because China had stated knocking at the doors of Tibet and it was feared that the Maharaja's attitude would count much in the event of any attack by China.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF
SIKKIM WITH INDIAN AID

NEHRU'S VISIT TO SIKKIM IN 1952 start A NEW
AGE IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SIKKIM:-

Indo Sikkim treaty of 1950, confirmed the protectorate status of Sikkim. Jhon Lall who was appointed the Deewan of Sikkim made much improvement in economic and political life, with a notice to bring the government and people together to provide sta-

1. Sikkim - The story of Integration: S R Shukla: P.56

bility to the state. He abolished Lesse system & deprived Zamindars of the tax collecting powers. The controversial house tax was abolished and peasants were assured that they could only be deprived of their land by due process of law. These measures created some understanding between the Maharaja and the people.

To strengthen this bond of friendship, realising the strategic importance of the state Pt. Nehru the Prime Minister of India, alongwith Mrs. Gandhi paid a visit to Sikkim in April, 1952. This was the most important event in the history of Sikkim, that a Prime Minister of any country, more so of India, was visiting the state.

The purpose of his visit was to strengthen the state's economic and political structure, as it was highly strategic for India's defence. During his visit, Nehru passed through Nathu La road, which was the main trade route across 15,512 feet, the High Himalayan pass on the Sikkim-Tibet border.

Addressing a public gathering at Gangtok, Nehru asked the people of Sikkim to develop a wider conception of Nationalism which would bind them together in

peace and amity. He called upon the different communities living in the state namely Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepalese to forget the religious and caste differences in the larger interest of the state. Emphasizing the strategic importance of the state Nehru exhorted the people not to rely only on Himalayas, as their natural weapon, but to build up their own strength for the permanent safety of their country.¹

During his visit Nehru realised the economic growth of the state was essential for the political stability. Hence Pt. Nehru and Sir Tashi Namgyal laid the foundation for the planned development of the state. A number of experts of the Indian Planning Commission visited Sikkim during the year 1953-54 to help the state authorities in preparing the development plans and survey its health condition and forest resources. A seven year plan drafted by Sikkim Durbar for the period of 1954-61 was approved by the Government of India and fund was provided for its implementation, to take Sikkim out from age old poverty.²

1. Hindustan Times : April 28, 1952.

2. Sikkim and India : B S K Grover : P-103.

On March 15, 1955, the Chogyal of Sikkim introduced the Sikkim Development Plan to the people in the following words.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Sikkim Development plan to my people. The government of India had kindly agreed, after the Prime Minister's visit to Sikkim in 1952, to assist Sikkim with funds, for the implementation of her development schemes. My government had accordingly prepared a plan for the development of Sikkim, including an expenditure of 2.25 crore rupees, during the seven years period - 1954-61, and the Government of India had intimated their agreement to make financial grants to cover its entire expenditure."

Although the plan was to take effect from 1954 as originally scheduled, but actual implementation commenced from 1955, as the first year was spent mainly in preparation and recruitment of the personnel.

Following were the main features of this plan.

(1) COMMUNICATION:

The opening of North and Eastern Sikkim by extending the national Highway to Lachen and Lachun in the North and to Nathu La in the East, a second traffic

artery to the East from Ranipal to Pakyong and Rhenock and finally linking with Rangpo. These throughfares were to be the responsibility initially of the Indian C P W D and later of the Indian Border Roads Organisation. Another road was to be constructed from Singtam through Namchi and Naya Bazar and circling back to Singtam via Geyzing and Rabangla.

- (2) More primary and secondary schools were to be opened.
- (3) Hospitals, dispensaries in the various parts to be built up.
- (4) Geological and Forest Surveys were to be conducted.
- (5) Traditional art and craft is to be reviewed.
- (6) Irrigation facilities should be increased to enhance the agriculture and horticulture output.
- (7) Hydro Electric Projects should be constructed with a view to create avenue for Industrial development.

The above plan required substantial economic resources and manpower, which Government of India agreed to provide.¹ A total sum of Rs. 32.369 million

1. Annual Report of Ministry of External Affairs, 1954-55
Govt. of India.

rupees was spent during the period of 1954-61. This did not include the amount spent directly by the Government of India for the extension of National Highway to Norther and Eastern Sikkim. Besides various subsidies were provided to boost the economy, such as - subsidy on interest rates, subsidy on power, concession in Salestax, subsidy on pre-operative expenses, subsidy on publicity Machinery on Hire Purchase would be made available.

While going to Bhutan in 1955, Nehru paid his second visit to Sikkim and declared open Gangtok-Nathu La Road. During his second visit at atmosphere of friendliness and informality was created between the two countries.

The first seven year plan was not more than an orientation to development, and a preparation for launching of a real economic plan. The development of Sikkim started rapidly with 6th five year plan of the Government of India, because Sikkim did not have enough resources to develop on its own.

It is stated in Draft Annual Plan 1984-85, published by Government of Sikkim Planning and Development Department, Gangtok, that "as in the past,

the state is not able to make any contribution to the plan from its own resources. This is because it has not been possible to bridge the non-plan gap. The plan is therefore expected to be implemented exclusively through central assistance.

To assess the economic development of Sikkim, it would be proper to study the funds allotted in 6th five year plan for different heads, which was completed in March, 1985.

The 65% population of Sikkim still live on traditional agriculture, hence during 6th plan Rs. 3002.00 lakh were allocated for Agriculture and Allied Services, which included, Research and Education, Crop husbandry, soil and water conservation, Food, Animal husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries Forest, marketing, storage and warehousing. The Government of India laid emphasis, to disseminate, modern knowledge as widely as possible to increase the agricultural output.

Although Sikkim is situated in a heavy rainfall zone, there are certain periods in the year, when dry conditions prevail, necessitating an approach to wards the adaptation of dry farming. Hence government

of India include it in its 20 point programme for the state.

Within a period of 6 years 16 Regional farms with 74 VLW centres were established. Agricultural development through Regional centres has proveded very effective. In 7th five year plan the increase in the number of Regional Council were proposed. In Sikkim 100% of farm waste is utilized in converting it into manures. Sikkim's soil being acidic, is treated with Dehradun rock giving very good results-

Following are the centrally sponsored Schemes for increasing Agricultural products:- ¹

- (1) Maize Improvement Scheme.
- (2) Mini Pits Programmes
- (3) Rice Community Nursery
- (4) Development of pulses.
- (5) Development of oil-seeds.
- (6) Assistance to small and marginal farmers.

Besides agriculture, Sikkim has considerably improved in the production of goat meat, fruit-juices, handicrafts, bamboo-crafts, wood carving, tea. The notable feature of Sikkim's economy is that it is self reliant in the field of power generation during Monsoon with the completion of 2nd stage of Lagyup-Hydel Project in April, 1983.

.Forest cover in Sikkim has increased while it has declined in all the other states of India.

The task force on the Industrial development in the state was constituted by the Government of India, under the chairmanship of the Development Commissioner Small Scale Industries. This committee has outlined the potential areas of Industrial development in the state. Following are the important factories functioning with centre's aid.¹

(1) Roller Flour Mill, (2) Sikkim Time Corporation, (3) Government Fruit Preservation Factory, (4) Fruit Processing and vegetable preservation.

Industrial Development Bank of India is giving 90% as loan of the total cost. Sikkim Mining Corporation,² a joint undertaking of the Government of India and State Government has found out the deposits of dolomite, low grade coal. Efforts are being made to assess Silica and magnesia rocks. Some indication of Lime Stone deposits has been obtained in Ranjet Valley.³

The total road length of Sikkim by the end of VI the Plan was 1241 Kms. Out of 22 weak bridges

1, 2 & 3. SIKKIM STATE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN ; 1985-86

3 were taken up for reconstruction during 6th Plan. This would facilitate tourism and industrial development.

The fund allocation in VI & VIIth Five year Plans will point out the economic progress taking place in Sikkim: Allocation of funds for different heads of development during VIth Five Year Plan are as follows:-¹

Agriculture & Allied Services	3,301.00 lakhs
Research and Education	44.00 lakhs
Crop Husbandrys	990.00 lakhs
Soil and water conservation & Area Development	662.00 lakhs
Animal Husbandrys	425.00 Lakhs
Dairy Development	75.00 lakhs
Fisheries	100.00 lakhs
Forest	570.00 lakhs
Store Warehousing	48.00 lakhs
<u>Irrigation & Flood Control & Power:</u>	
Minor Irrigation	400.00 lakhs
Flood Control Projects	50.00 lakhs
Power	1200.00 lakhs
Industries & Minerals	654.00 lakhs
Transport & Communication	3075.00 lakhs
Forestry (Including Protection of wild life + Construction of National Parks.	350.00 lakhs

Funds allocated for different heads in VIth Plan
are given as under:-

Agriculture and Allied Services	... 4,850.00 lakhs
Irrigation, Flood Control & Power	... 5,099.00 lakhs
Industry and Minerals	... 850.00 lakhs
Transport	... 4,468.00 lakhs
Fisheries	100.00 lakhs
Village & Small Scale Industries	... 330.00 lakhs
Promotion of Art & Culture	... 100.00 lakhs
Health Service	... 173.00 lakhs

While developing Sikkim's Economy, Government of India has been conscious enough that traditional skill should survive alongwith the introduction of new techniques.

National Scheme of Inservice Training
of school Teachers - 1986

Besides economic development the Government of India has taken great care for the education of masses so that scientific outlook and model thinking may be inculcated in the people. With this objective in mind the Government of India proposed to train 5 lakhs teachers all over the country, under new Education policy. Sikkim's share of responsibility is to train 487 teachers, all the expenses incurred would be borne by the central government.

SIKKIM'S DEMAND FOR PARTICIPATION
IN ITS DEFENCE:-

Mahaaraj Kumar during his visit to New Delhi in November, 1960, proposed before Prime Minister, Nehru, that a militia consisting of Lepchas & Bhutias may be organized to inspire confidence in the local inhabitants as well as to defend the border.¹ He said that militia would be officered by Indian officials. In this context, it may be noted that Sikkim's participation in its security was minimum. Even the border checkpoints which were manned by Sikkimese, were replaced by Indian officials in 1960, in the wake of Chinese menace.

Though Sikkim's contribution in the Indian defense system was quite significant. A large number of Nepalese from Sikkim were recruited in the Indian army,² while Maharaj Kumar proposed for militia is not clear.

This proposal divided the public opinion in Sikkim into two groups. Lepchas and Bhutias were in the favour of organizing the militia while Nepalese were against it. They pleaded if Indian army cannot

1. Hindustan Times : 29th November, 1960.

2. The Hindu : May 4, 1961.

defend Sikkim, how a small militia would be able to defend the border. They thought that it would be used for the suppression of democratic forces. These democratic forces were no one but Nepalese of Sikkim.

About the defence of Sikkim the treaty of 1950 says, that "the Government of India will be responsible for the defence and territorial integrity of Sikkim. It shall have the right to take such measures as it considers necessary for the defence of Sikkim or the security of India, whether preparatory or otherwise or whether within or outside Sikkim. In particular the Government of India shall have the right to station troops anywhere within Sikkim."

Jawaharlal Nehru assured the Indian parliament that arrangements for the defence of Sikkim were, in view of the Government, adequate. Even Maharaj Kumar also said time and again that "we have absolute confidence in the capacity of Indian army to defend Sikkim against aggression."¹ He again said in March, 1965 that he was fully satisfied with India's defence preparation in his state.²

1. Hindustan Times : January 19, 1963.

2. Hindustan Times : January 19, 1963.

However during the talks between Maharaj Kumar and External Affairs Ministry which concluded in New Delhi it was agreed that Sikkim Palace Guard which then consisted of sixty men under a junior Commissioned Officer, would be expanded to two companies. These would be officered by trained persons and equipped by the Indian army. Indian army officers would also assist in the recruitment of the guards. It was also agreed that by rotation, one company would be on palace duty while the other would be attached to the Indian army in Sikkim for border security so as to give the Sikkimese a sense of participation in the defence of their own territory.¹ While returning home Maharaj Kumar said in Calcutta on June 11, 1961, "We wanted the people to have a psychological realization that they are the part of the show and accordingly we suggested to the Prime Minister Nehru for some sort of association with the defence of Sikkim to which he agreed. The proposed expansion of guards would be under the direction of officers to be lent by the Government of India."²

1. Asian Recorder; Vol. VII, No. 27, July 28, 1961
P.4033.

2. The Hindu : June, 12, 1961.

Various measures were adopted to modify the organization of Sikkim Guards. They were declared eligible for enrolment at the National Defence Academy, Khadakvatsala in India and a number of places has been reserved for them. Recruitment policy for the Sikkim Guards were also modified. The traditional system under which the membership of the guard was restricted to the Bhutia and Lepcha communities was now abandoned.¹ This eliminated one important source of criticism levelled against the Guards. However the expansion of Sikkim Guards did not lessen the interest of the Government of Sikkim in the organisation of the militia or Home-guards. In 1962, at the time of Chinese aggression and again during the war with Pakistan in 1965, Sikkim again proposed the formation of Para Military unit. Maharaj Kumar said in Calcutta in July 1963, that they had approached the Indian Government informally for the training of Sikkimese in Mountain Warfare. They had also decided to raise the Home Gaards and equip them with modern weapons. But the Government of India did not show any enthusiasm over the proposals. However Sikkim's interest in the organisation of a local Para

1. Sikkim and India : Storm & Consolidation: B S K Grover : Page-117.

Military should not be interpreted as a step towards the modification of existing defence and security arrangements with India. It is much less an indication of the State's determination to assume these responsibilities for itself. Throughout the dangerous and difficult period of Sino-Indian hostility, The Chogyal had repeatedly and clearly stressed Sikkim's faith and dependence upon Indian defence system. In view of the Government of Sikkim a Home guard or militia is required primarily for internal security, because internal dissidence would be better handled by this new institutional arrangement than by the Indian army, Palace Guards or Sikkim Police.

However the Sikkim guards have been fully equipped and presented with colours in accordance with the tradition of Indian Army. According to agreement of May 1973, the Sikkim Guards would remain directly under the control of Chogyal.

SIKKIM'S SUBJECT REGULATION ACT, 1961:-¹

In 1961, Sikkim Durbar promulgated the Sikkim's Subject Regulations, providing the rules regarding the citizenship to the various residents of Sikkim under which Nepalese were descriminated. This was done with

1. Sikkim and India : Storm & Consolidation : B S K Grover : page-120.

an intention to suppress S.S.C. and S; N.C. whose main base was Nepalese population.¹ Sikkim National Congress raised the slogan, "India practices democracy at Home and imperialism abroad". Regulation promulgated in 1961 referred to Lepchas, Bhutias and Tsongs as the citizens of Sikkim. This led Nepalese, who constituted the 75% of the population, to feel that they are being alienated. It was also contented that the purpose behind this regulation was to reduce the effectiveness of the majority Nepalese community. It was with this and in view that the 15 year residence qualification was laid down for participating in the election.

At the intervention of the Government of India, Maharaj Kumar had to amend the regulation & make the following declarations in Delhi:-

"The recent debate on the Regulation in Sikkim Council had indicated that there was general apprehension regarding the non-inclusion of the word 'Nepalese' in some sections of the regulation, and this apprehension has given rise to a feeling of discrimination, because

1. Sikkim - the story of Integration : S R Shukla :
P-64.

other communities like Lepchas and Bhutias and Tson-
gs were mentioned by name in these very sections. The
regulation was promulgated after protracted discussion
and none of the political leaders had pointed out at
that time, that it was discriminatory against any sec-
tion of the people. Anyhow in accordance with the Go-
vernment policy of fostering unity amongst the diff-
erent sections of the people, the Maharaja had now deci-
ded to delete reference to any community by name, from
the Regulation, thereby removing any trace that might
even be erroneously construed as being discriminatory.¹

The Government of India was concerned with the
Regulation only to the extent to know who were the sub-
jects to be given protection under the agreement bet-
ween the two governments. But every time Maharaja made
the announcement from New Delhi, it created the impre-
ssion that it was being done with the consent and app-
roval of the government of India. This created suspicion
against the government of India in the minds of Sikkim
people. At an early stage the Indian Government had made
it clear to the political parties in Sikkim, that whatever
the Sikkim government might have done was entirely on its

1. The Hindu : January, 1962.

own initiative and responsibility.¹

In spite of this it was thought that Government of India was manoeuvring through its political agents in Gangtok.

THONDUP NAMGYAL ATTITUDE
TOWARDS INDIA :

Palden Thondup Namgyal was coronated as the ruler of Sikkim on April 4, 1965. Government of India send felicitations and gifts on this occasion & recognized him as the Chogyal of Sikkim. The speech rendered by Chogyal on the occasion, throws light on his attitude towards India he said,

"India is a great and peace loving country and we feel secure in her protection. But we are also conscious and alive to the need of preparing our own people for any eventuality, so that they may be ready to lay down their lives in the defence of their country should the occasion arise. India has been a good friend to Sikkim, and we have received from our great neighbour generous assistance for which I and my people shall always remain deeply grateful. The bond of friendship between our two countries are strong and indissoluble, and I take the opportunity

1. Hindustan Times: April 14, 1961.

to affirm, on this solemn day that it will be our purpose and endeavour to yet further strengthen these bonds in fullest measure. We recall with our profound affection the memory of Jawahar Lal Nehru a true and steadfast friend of Sikkim and we have confidence that the Government of India will continue to hold out to us the hand of friendship.¹

Chogyal was assured by Mrs. Laxmi Menon, India's representative on the occasion, that his expectations would be fulfilled. Speaking on the momentous occasion she said-

"On the auspicious occasion of your Ser-Thri-Nga-sol it gives me great pleasure to convey to you the greetings and good wishes of the President, the Government and the people of India for a long and happy rule. We are certain that your benevolent guidance will lead the people of Sikkim to greater prosperity and well being and promote and preserve their cultural and spiritual values."

"India has had long and historic bonds with Sikkim, which go far beyond the terms of Treaty which your Highness's late distinguished father concluded

1. Sikkim Coronation : No. 126 P-46.

with India. Your Highness had been good enough to refer to the feelings of friendship and affection which the late Prime Minister Nehru had for your family and your country. He had always expressed a special concern for Sikkim and extended assistance in her development plans. India will endeavour to continue this policy and will give substantial assistance in her future developments.¹

Hindustan Times, April 16, 1965 commented on this occasion in its editorial,
"It is to be hoped that the new reign will see closer and more fruitful collaboration between the two countries in all directions. The Maharaja has the advantages of combining intimate knowledge of his land and people, gained through many years of administrative responsibility with an awareness of international problems and of their impact on his country. Though desirous of maintaining Sikkim's distinctive culture and traditions, he knows that, it can no longer afford to remain a placid cultural back-water. The two five years plans have opened many windows on the outside world and provided many opportunities for

1. Sikkim Coronation : P-48.

international cooperation. India because of its geographical relationship and also for other historical reasons, must use all such opportunities for promoting Sikkim welfare.

But we could not see this spirit for very long time, even before his consecration as the ruler of Sikkim on 2nd December, 1963 Palden began to exercise considerable influence in the state politics. It was he who played very active role in getting the Standstill Agreement signed with the Government of India. Again in 1950 he negotiated a treaty with Government of India. The treaty was quite in favour of Sikkim's court, and he became the most popular figure of the state. His popularity enabled him to keep in check all the political forces for two decades.

There appears a change in Maharaja's attitudes towards India as soon as he is coronated. He discarded the title of Maharaja and went back to the old title of his forefathers - Chogyal. Government of India not only readily accepted this change but send a delegation to attend the coronation ceremony,

which was celebrated with lot of fanfare, somewhat excessive, considering the size of the state. It is possible that he was intentionally doing it to show off the world that he is not merely a nominal head of the state but has a real authority vested in him, recognized by his people.

Chogyal and Gyalmo did have the dreams to exercise some powers as was exercised by their counterparts in Nepal and Bhutan. To materialise their dreams, Chogyal and Gyalmo devised various means - such as devising a National flag and national anthem, and thus generating certain amount of regional nationalism in the people.

Chogyal was active on the political front to get independent status for Sikkim, while Mrs. Hope-cook was mobilising the public opinion, especially of the young educated masses through her 'study forum'.¹ She was advocating for Sikkim's status as it was before ~~Sikkim~~ Britains advance in India. She further pleaded for return of Darjeeling and Sikkim's enclave in Chumbi Valley, now in China's occupation. She was personally supervising the education in Sikkim. Each

1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan : P.103

text book was revised in a manner which identified Sikkimese as a distinct and separate race-culturally, ethnically and politically.¹ The aspiration of Sikkimese to own their own flag their own system of government and separate identity were highlighted in a very subtle manner. Such activities of Gyalmo led to a clash with Delhi & events of 1973 was the result.

Chogyal not only mobilised masses but entertained all non-Indian dignitaries to built up foreign pressure on India. It was quite essential to mention about Mrs. Hope cook here in this chapter, as it was she who played the key role in moulding Chogyal's attitudes towards India.² She wanted to become the queen of a sovereign state, that is why she created all those intrigues, when her dreams failed she deserted her husband and left at the moment of crisis.

On 8th February, 1966 in Gangtok, Chogyal stated before a press conference, "The Sikkim government wants some change in the treaty between India &

1. The Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-89.

2. The Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-92.

Sikkim signed in 1950. We have mentioned this matter to the External Affairs Ministry verbally."

These developments and change of attitude of Thondup Namgyal was viewed with anxiety by Mrs. Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, especially in the light of 1962 and 1965 wars with China and Pakistan respectively. Chogyal's declaration on March 17, 1958, to constitute a new state council consisting of 20 members 14 elected and 6 nominated. The election system was very complicated. After the election result it was alleged that a lot of rigging & corrupt practices were adopted. This led to quite an unrest in the public. The two important political parties, state Congress and National Party, suffered splits. In the resulting polarization Kazi Lhendup Dorji came up to the foreground as the principal figure who stood for communal amity.¹

There was widespread allegations in Sikkim that the polls were rigged to the advantage of National Party (Pro-Chogyal), and the subsequent developments created chaos and unrest in the state. The situation was beyond control of the state Government. Chogyal

1. The Himalayan Gateway : George Kotturan : P-106

The Chogyal and Kazi Dorji, both appeal to Indian Government for help. The Government of India complied with the request and sent B S Das, as the Chief Administrator of Sikkim. Chogyal though needed India's help but was quite bitter in his talks with Mr. Das, he said, "Mr. Das Sikkim is not Goa that the Government of India has sent you to take over as Chief Administrator. We have our separate identity and Indo-Sikkim's relations are governed by a treaty. The so-called popular leaders are nothing but a bunch of scoundrels, proped by the outside forces. If my police have not been disarmed and dishonoured by the Indian Army, I would have exposed each and everyone of them. I shall never forget the Indian Army for this."¹ He could never forgive India, till he was alive. He held India totally responsible for his downfall.

He could not compromised with the reality that Sikkim has no separate identity outside India, historically or legally. It may be possible if he would have been given a tactful and fitting treatment as warranted by his status, he could have played, positive role, in consolidation of Sikkim and would have relieved India of much burden.²

1. The Sikkim Sagas : B S Das : P-01.

2. The Sikkim Sagas : B S Das : P-115.

check on Chogyal's abuse of power, was reduced to the position of Chogyal's senior most Civil servant.¹ This was contrary to the spirit of 1950 understanding arrived at, with the foreign office in 1949 under which the Deewan was to act as an instrument of check on Chogyal's abuse of his administrative power. With the decline in power of political officer, Delhi lost its leverage to check the growing independence of Chogyal. Soon Chogyal's ambition got better of him and he manipulated the elections to install his own people on one hand in the government and to obtain a status for Sikkim similar to Bhutan. This attitude of Chogyal brought him into conflict with the majority of his people, and Delhi over the years, when Chogyal started assesting his personality beyond internal issues and came into conflict with Delhi, the anti Chogyal political parties began to look forward for India's support which Delhi gave in full measures from 1972 onwards. The Chogyal having lost his credibility with the Indian Government and committing one mistake after the other Delhi took full advantage. The agitation of April, 1973 was a sequel to these development.

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-11.

AGITATION IN SIKKIM IN 1973

Till 1947, formation of organised political parties was not possible due to prevalent political system. The people were dependent either on feudal lords for their basic needs or the illiterate masses were dominated by religious leaders. Over all the authoritarian British monarchy subjugated people and demanded total obedience from them. This authoritarian attitude of British monarchy, feudal Lords and Religious leaders never gave any opportunity for political consciousness. But the political changes, that were taking place in Indian politics did leave impact upon Sikkim. The Indian freedom struggle created a feeling of self-consciousness and the desire to free oneself from feudalistic yoke. "Driven to a state of disperation but encouraged by public utterances of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders of Indian National Congress, a large and fully representative section of the people of Sikkim have been roused to make an attempt on behalf of the masses to achieve their own salvation.¹

1. A few Facts about Sikkim: a Pamphlet: Tashi Tshering.

As a result, various political parties came into existence in Sikkim, e.g. Praja Sudharak Samaj, later it merged with other two political organizations to form Sikkim State Congress. This party was mainly supported by Nepalis. Soon a new party known as National party emerged backed mainly by Lepcha and Bhutia population. Sikkim state Congress mainly aimed at abolition of Land Lordism and Sikkim's accession to India while National party at King's initiative spend all its energy to fight democratic forces and create racial difference to avoid any change of consolidation between different ethnic groups. Sikkim State Congress and National Party had deep difference over the question of Sikkim's accession to India, and this cleavage led to a great political upheaval in Sikkim in 1973. Sikkim State Congress pleaded that accession to India is essential for Sikkim's economic development and, establishment of democracy. On the otherhand National Party ruled out possibility of Sikkim's accession to India on following ground -¹

(A) Historically, socially, culturally, Sikkim had closer affinities with Bhutan and Tibet.

(B) From geographical and ethnic point of view Sikkim was not a part of India. She had only political relations with the latter, which were imposed on her.

(C) From the religious point of view, being Lamaist she was quite distinct from India.¹

Demand of accession to India was also discouraged by Indian Government.

By the 5th general Election which was held in January 1973, the polarisation of political parties was complete. National Party stood as the Party of Bhutia and Lepcha people while the Sikkim National Congress and the Sikkim Janta Congress stood as parties of Nepali people. A few Bhutia-Lepcha leaders and followers were of course still attached to the National congress but that did not alter the fact that it modestly drew its strength from Nepali community. Similarly National Party have attracted few Nepalese to it.

In the election the Nationalist party won eleven seats, securing all the seven Bhutia-Lepcha seats, two Nepali one Sangha and one Scheduled caste seat. The Sikkim National Congress won five seats including the

1. State Govt. and Politics : N Sengupta : P-153.

general and the Tsong seat, while the Sikkim Janta congress secured two Nepali seats. During the counting of votes the representatives of the S.N.C. and the S.J.C. complained against the officers of adding the National Party in rigging the election.¹

They boycotted the election and lodged the protest against the Pro-Palace and pro National Party officials on election duty. The long standing demand for popular government, written constitution, fundamental rights and universal franchise based on joint electorate etc. brought the two congress parties closer. They formed a joint Action Committee with Kazi Lhendup Dorji, as its Chairman. Both the parties started organizing masses in favour of these demands. While the mass movement was being organized, the leader of Sikkim Janta Party was arrested. This influriated the masses particularly the younger generation. Chogyal instead of paying attention to fullfill the demands of agitating masses, was busy in supervising the arrangements for the celebration of his 50th birthday. This made the confrontation between Chogyal and the masses imminent.

1. Contemporary Development in Sikkim - An Appraisal
Indian and Foreign Review, Vol. 12, No.3, 15.11.74
N.C.Menon.

On 4th April, 1973, while the celebration was going on, people clashed with the Police. Demonstration continued on 5th April also. Thousands of people from different parts of Sikkim poured in Gangtok, administration totally collapsed in the south and in the east, where people had virtually established a "Janta Raj". Chogyal found himself unable to control the situation issued the warrant of arrest for the leaders of joint action committee, who sought refuge in Political Officer's office. Mr. Avtar Singh, a Senior officer of the Ministry of External Affairs, was sent by the Government of India to assess the situation.¹

Chogyal requested the Indian Government to intervene to restore law and order. The leaders of joint action committee also requested to save innocent people from ruthless repression of the Durbar. Government of India accepted the request of Durbar and sent B S Dass as Chief Administrator of Sikkim.

At the initiative of the government of India a Tripartite Agreement was signed between the Durbar and the political parties and the foreign Secretary of

1. The Statesman, Calcutta : 9th April, 1973.

TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT IN MAY, 1973

As I have noted in the last chapter to assess the situation in Sikkim Foreign Secretary of India, Kewal Singh was sent to Sikkim. Kewal Singh after surveying the situation returned to Delhi, leaving the responsibility on Chief Administrator B S Das to handle the situation tactfully.

Kewal Singh again came back to Sikkim on April, 22 with a draft agreement, which was not complete and left many issues vague like powers, of the proposed and elected government. The Chogyal's dynasty was assured of continuity and so were his personal privileges, but he was to exercise his residuary powers only through the Chief Executive who would refer every dispute to the Political officer for Delhi's arbitration in case of disagreement. It hardly met the aspiration of political parties whose hopes were raised to a point which matched the system of Government in any of Indian States.¹

Conceding the demand of one man one vote principle, the draft restricted it to a parity between the majority and minority to protect the Bhutia, Lepcha

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : p-25.

interest. Actually it was a revised version of 1949 arrangement with Deewan being replaced by a powerful Chief Executive keeping an effective check on both the Chogyal and elected government. Chief Executive was answerable to Delhi.

Chogyal in the beginning was highly irritated but ultimately sequel this agreement paving way for the Tripartite Agreement.

On the advice of Kewal Singh, political parties were sounded about the agreement which they could not relish. Their demand was that unless subjects like - Home, Finance and general administration was given to the elected government, Chogyal would misuse the power. Hence a new draft was prepared in the Foreign Office, making some minor changes based on the discussions with the leaders. Kewal Singh returned on May 7th with the new draft.

Chogyal got infuriated on seeing the draft. He could only be calmed, when he was assured that there are only minor changes in the April 23, Agreement, and this draft would work only as Public Relation document, but he asked assurance that Indo-Sikkim relations would be governed by the treaty of 1950. Foreign office assured

that treaty and subsequent agreement would guide the Indo-Sikkim relation.

Tripartite Agreement was signed on 7th May, 1973 in Chogyal's Palace where all the three parties i.e. Chogyal, the representative of Government of India and the political parties were present. Chogyal rebuked political parties for selling out Sikkim to India, his utterances were highly sentimental, kept the leaders of political parties quite mum.

The main features of the agreement were, the chief Executive will also function as the speaker of Assembly and also head the government as the Chairman of Executive Council. He would be virtually the chief minister having final say in the appointment of the ministeres and allocation of portfolios. Conflict between Chogyal and chief Executive was to be resolved only by Delhi through political office.¹

The people of different shades of opinion treated the agreement differently. Indian press hailed the agreement as a significant break through. Kazi and his party treated this as a major victory against Chogyal.

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-

Chogyal regarded as complete sell out of Sikkim to India.

B S Das, the Chief Executive himself suspected that this agreement would shift the conflict between Chogyal and political parties, to conflict between Delhi and political parties.

There was a very significant result of the treaty, that Lepcha, Bhutia community and Nepali community for reasons of their own developed a feeling of pro-merger after the May Agreement. Lepcha and Bhutias thought that Nepalese would get dominance in the government and Delhi would be forced to according to the wishes of their leaders while Nepali leaders thought that though they are in majority but they cannot rule Sikkim unless and until Sikkim is merged with India, because in India, there is no provision of ethnic party in the Indian constitution, and if Sikkim is merged with India Nepalis would be able to form their government on the basis of majority. Lepchas and Butias thought, if Sikkim is merged with India, they can get the privilege of scheduled tribes, which is enshrined in Indian contistution and many people are getting benefit in different Indian states.

ELECTION in 1974: -

May Agreement of 1973 envisaged general election by the end of 1973 to pave way for the democratic government. But holding election in such a near future was impossible due to lack of required preparation. There were certain other obstacles which were to be removed e.g. election was to be held under the supervision of the Chief Election Commissioner of India. Hence T Swaminatham was sent to Sikkim to supervise the conditions and order the necessary preparation for the conduction of smooth and peaceful and fair election. Swaminathan was to appoint an election officer in Sikkim to conduct the election. Chogyal objected against appointing an Indian officer. He wanted that some Sikkim officer should be appointed which was not acceptable to various political parties, as they feared Sikkimi officer cannot act impartially. The second problem in conducting the election was that the Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali communities were demanding special seats to add to their advantage. The matter was not to be resolved so easily. Ultimately an agreement was reached that instead 30 seats for assembly (which was to be divided on

parity basis between Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali communities) There would be 32 seats. Two more seats were added one seat was to be represented by monasteries and the other was given to the Scheduled - caste. This was a compromise formula as monastrial seat was to be represented by Lepcha, Bhutia community while scheduled caste was to be represented by Nepalis.

Preparation of Electoral roll was another problem. If new electoral roll was to be prepared both major rival communities would resort to undue means to get maximum number of their supporters to be enrolled that might lead to unpleasant situation. Hence it was agreed upon by the efforts of Chief Executive officer and Chief Election officer of India that old electoral roll would be used.

Delimitation of the constituencies was another problem. To fit in 25% ethnic group of Bhutia Lepcha into 50% seat was a delicate matter.¹ Excepting six constituency in the north and in the Capital, the rest were Nepalis majority areas. After a great deal of debate and discussions, the earlier constituencies were subdivided and split to accomodate 15 seats for

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-41

the minorities, the 16th seats for the monks posing no problem. Thus when the preparation were made, the elections were announced for April, 1974.

Elections were to be held between rival political parties i.e. the National Party and the Sikkim State Congress (the party was the result of the merger of various anti-Chogyal's organizations) Chogyal in desperation to retain power in the democratic set up created a new political party at the eve of election. Though National Party was regarded as Pro-Chogyal but Chogyal perhaps lost confidence in it. and formed 'Young Pioneers'. This was headed by his young niece, Sodanla. These young pioneers were a bunch of hoodlums even in the eyes of Chogyal's supporters.¹ and when they indulged in drunken brawls and strong arms tactics, their credibility totally went down and disheartened the leaders of the National Party, who were strong Chogyal's supporters. Realising the failures of 'young Pioneers' and apathy of the National Party, Chogyal created another People's Democratic Party led by some inconsequential and dissipated Bhutias and Nepalis. The worst was when the leaders came into conflict on the same

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : P-41

election platform on issues like parity or the Chogyal's future role. The Election result brought unexpected results. National Congress won 31 out of 32 seats. Only one seat went to opposition National Party. Even the leader of Congress party Kazi Khendup Dorji was himself surprised at the election result. During the election Indian and Foreign press representatives were present. Neither any election petition was filed nor any complaint of rigging was lodged. Chogyal committed blunder in erecting new party at the eve of election which annoyed his supporters and ultimately he lost his political ground. Even the monks did not support him instead elected a Sikkim Congress candidate. Kazi the representative of democracy and change came out as victorious candidate as a result even those who were sitting quiet came out openly to support him. Kazini who was banned to enter Sikkim was now allowed to return.

The election results were a final blow to the Chogyal. He stood isolated and shattered. The inevitability of his playing a constitutional role dawned on him finally but his inherent weakness lay

not accepting the obvious. He appeared to have reconciled to the new situation, but behind the scenes, he began subverting the loyalty of Kazis supporters. However he failed to realize one basic fact. His confrontation was no more with Kazi but with Delhi, which had the strength to deal with all situations. Over the years he had come believe that Delhi lacked the tenacity to pursue a matter to its logical conclusion and having experienced the contradictions in Delhi's establishment at the senior-most levels, he still hoped to sway a few to his side. He decided to give a fight but it was different Delhi, he was dealing with.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SIKKIM FOR
ESTABLISHING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT :

Sikkim during her early phase was under Tibetan tutelage. Even when the British Government started asserting in Sikkim and Tibetan control faded away. The Sikkimi rulers still wanted to preserve theocratic feudalism because of their historical cultural and religious ties with Sikki. The rulers of Sikkim tried their best to project a distinct political image of Sikkim, which should clearly show more affinity to Tibet. Propitiation of Lamaist deities, display of

Tibetan insignia of regality and the ritual dances and processions of Lamas were regular features on the state-sponsored festive occasions. Through an etymological revolution, the important position in state were being renamed in Tibetan. A National Anthem reportedly of considerable antiquity was discovered. A variety of Sino-Tibetan style of architectures were identified as Sikkimese.¹ In short ruler was engaged in transplanting the items of Tibetan theocratic traditionalism into Sikkimese soil. In his effort he was supported by Lamas and Bhutias and Buddhists, because they identified themselves with the Lamaist theocratic traditionalism.

On the otherhand a reformist movement started in Sikkim during 1940 which aimed at establishing liberal Democracy, as an alternative to theocratic feudalism. The most enthusiastic supporter of Democratic Government were Nepali Hindus, Who wanted people's participation in decision making process. Lack of common heritage restricted the growth of the Democratic

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : Page-153.

movement. Different ethnic stock believed in different political institution. Lepcha and Bhutia community were less responsive to the concept of people's government. They had a fear that switchover to democratic system would crush their identity as they would be outnumbered by majority of Nepali Hindus.

Conflict between two contradictory forces couldn't have existed longer without any result. In this tug of war between theocracy and democracy, the Sikkimese elite at last resolve to solve this dilemma. among such efforts the most serious attempt was made in May 1973, when the ruler under force of circumstances signed a tripartite agreement conceding the demand for the formation of popular government.¹ The agreement reduced unbridled authority of the ruler. State Council was replaced by State Assembly to be elected by the people on the basis of parity formula.

May Agreement of 1973 paved way for the formation of democratic Government. In April, 1974 the elections were held and a popular government was formed with Chogyal as merely a constitutional head.

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Assembly thus formed passed the Government of Sikkim Bill on 3rd July, 1974 which became an act the next day. Adoption of this bill again caused a rift between two forces i.e. Chogyal the representative of theocratic feudalism and Sikkim State Congress, because article 30(c) of the act sought 'representation' for the people of Sikkim in the political institution of India'. This was done with a view to finish even a slight chance to regain the authority by the Chogyal. Some bureaucrats at the instance of ruler proposed deletion of Section 30(c) of the Government of Sikkim Bill. As a reaction people resorted to demonstrations. Government of India intervened at this stage and advised Chogyal to reconcile to the constitutional reforms.¹

Thus the liberal democratic system won the battle against the theocratic traditionalism. This led to some serious developments. The entire power structure in Sikkim was reorganized. The ruler, as the incarnate God, protector of the Chhos (religion) and the minority Lepcha-Bhutia tribals, the richest

1. Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : Page-159.

man in the land with considerable private estate, had been stripped off his unbridled authority and given the status of a figure head. Likewise Lepcha Bhutia neo-rich plebians had to learn to live without privileges and the Lamaist church had to function as purely a religious institution.

All along this march from feudalism to Democracy India was giving protection to democratic forces as stability in Sikkim is highly essential for India's security, and the democratic forces in Sikkim wanted closer relation with Indian Union, and was committed to accept common destiny and share geo-political reality with India.

36TH AMMENDMENT Act AND STATUS OF¹
ASSOCIATE STATE FOR SIKKIM

A new democratic government came into existence in Sikkim in July, 1974 according to the provision of May, 1973 Agreement. This government was to function according to a new constitution which was being drafted in Delhi by constitutional experts.

Chief Minister Kazi Made a formal request to the Government of India on July 24, to fulfill the objectives laid down under clause 30 of the new constitution.

1. Sikkim - The Story of Integration: S R Shukla: P.265.

tution. The request meant that Sikkim should be given representation in Indian Parliament. The request could be met with only after the Indian constitution is ammended, because territory, beyond India can't get representation in the Indian Parliament. On the otherhand Chogyal was persistently pleading to have separate status for Sikkim. He also send a request through Chief Executive B S Das to Delhi.¹

On August 12, the Chief Minister again wrote to Mr. Das to concede to his earlier demands. Delhi now promptly sent a draft constitutional ammendment Bill (36th ammendment Bill, Act of 1974) which stated, "After article 2 of the Constitution, the following shall be inserted, namely - 2A- Sikkim, which comprises the territories specified in the 10th schedule shall be associated with the Union on terms and conditions set out in that schedule."

The bill was introduced in the Parliament and was passed with an overwhelming majority and Sikkim became in September, 1974 an associate state of India providing her representation in the Indian Parliament.

1. Sikkim Saga : B s Das : P-56

Associate Status gave a distinct personality to Sikkim compared to other Indian states. Even the election of Sikkimese representations to the Indian Parliament were to be under Sikkim's constitution. The assembly could also amend Sikkim's constitution, it could at any time withdraw its representation from Indian Parliament. The Chogyal's status remained intact.

The new status of Sikkim opened new opportunities and vistas for the Sikkimese to play a vital role on the Indian scene, and it brought Sikkim at par with the people of other Indian states.¹

36th constitution amendment bill was passed by Lok Sabha by a majority of 310 to 7.

Passing of the Bill invited many reactions, some in favour and some against it. Those who were against alleged that it has opened pandora's box which might set in motion an adverse international reaction. Critics pointed out certain other states like Nagaland, Mizoram, Nammu and Kashmir might demand the same status for themselves. This trend will lead to weaken the unity of India.

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P-135

Some critics from C P I - M and Congress-O, criticised that seat of Chogyal was still retained. They also expressed the fear that such move would be regarded as annexation of Sikkim.

The Socialist, The Jan Sangh and the Bhartiya Lok Dal lent their powerful support to the bill and demanded that Sikkim should be straight away admitted as the 22nd state of the Indian Union.¹

Some people expressed the fear that this might embitter the relation with neighbouring country. Swaran Singh, the then Foreign Minister, without naming China said, "This friendship and bond between India and Sikkim will not be used to the detriment of any country. All our neighbouring countries and the international community as a whole will understand the basis of our relationship, and fully support the decision which have been taken by the democratic forces in the two countries." He assured the people of Sikkim that their development and welfare would be the concern and responsibility of India, and it should be the endeavour of Parliament to ensure that India was not lacking in its desire to work for and contribute to the development of Sikkim. He further assured the people

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration : S R Shukla P.136

of Sikkim that "This historic decision to give representation to Sikkim on a basis of equality will be potent force in strengthening democratic forces in Sikkim and in further cementing the relations between us on the basis of friendship, understanding and cooperation."

The Government of Sikkim Bill which provided associate status to Sikkim was passed by Sikkim Assembly on September 5th, 1974. Passing of the bill received wide appaases in Sikkim, people celebrated it throughout the state. Only pro-Chogyal faction was not happy with the prospect. Expressing his satisfaction Kazi Ihendup Dorji, the Chief Minister conveyed on his and on behalf of the Government of Sikkim and its people, thanks, "for having positively responded to the repeated unanimous request of the Sikkim assembly for a closer link with India." Kazi further said, "we have learnt with great satisfaction of the overwhelming endorsement by the Lok Sabha of the constitutional framework for a link between Sikkim and India - what we have long sought for and what the people of Sikkim wanted, we look forward to this association which will surely be of greater benefit to the people of Sikkim.¹

World Press widely published this news, baring Nepal and China no one criticised this move. China used

1. The Politics of Sikkim : A C Sinha : P-144.

all the available media to condemn India as Imperialist. It was held that views of Assembly is not the views of people. Foreign Minister, Swaran Singh confidently and wisely defended the move saying it is not only Sikkim which is having special relationship with a neighbouring country. There are many more examples of such special relationships such as Puerto Rico is an associate state of U.S.A. Puerto Ricans are American citizens & are governed by American constitution. They sent one representative to the lower house of U.S.A., who is allowed to speak on the matters related with his own country, though he cannot speak. The U.S.A. government is responsible for its foreign relations, defence, customs, postal service and tele-communications.¹ Another example is the Hawaii Island which has the same relationship with U.S.A. which the Puerto Rico has. They also have a non-voting representative in U.S. Congress. During the plebescite held in 1959, people decided to merge completely with U.S.A. and it became 50th state of U.S.A.

Similarly U.K. also has same relationship with many Islands known as Channel Island i.e. Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark and Isle of Man. U.K. Government is not only responsible for their foreign relations but for their good government also.

Green land the World's second largest Island had special relationship with Den Mark which lately became the integral province of Denmark in 1953. These examples are enough to prove that there was nothing wrong constitutionally, historically or according to International customs, conventions and usages, in making Sikkim an associate state of India. Actually government of India was too late in taking such step. It was in the year 1890, that Sikkim became protectorate of India and was administered directly by the Resident or Political Officer, working under the Bengal government. In 1906, Lord Curzon, the Governor General of India transferred the administration of Sikkim from the government of Bengal to the Foreign Department of the Government of India. It was done in view of its strategic importance.

38TH AMENDMENT ACT - SIKKIM BECOMES
INTEGRAL PART OF INDIA

As was noted in the preceding chapter Chogyal never reconciled with 36th amendment bill passed by India and accepted by Sikkim Assembly, providing associate status to Sikkim. At the instigation of China and America (Chogyal's wife was an American lady, and was taking keen interest in the political developments in the state) and China.¹ Chogyal went to India. He couldn't meet the Prime

1. Sikkim: The story of Integration: S R Shukla: P-151

Minister, but was assured of the meeting Swaran Singh on latter's return in September 13, till then he stayed at Calcutta in order to keep the issue alive, his Secretary, Densappa issued a statement questioning the validity of Government of Sikkim Act. He questioned the constitutionality of the bill, because it was not signed by the Chogyal.

On the otherhand Chogyal's arch rival Kazi Dorji the Chief Minister of Sikkim wrote a letter to the Government of India, send through B S Das the Chief Executive. In the letter the Chief Minister asked the Government of India's willingness to discharge the rights responsibilities and powers and to accept the requests, set out in the (Government of Sikkim) Act and the resolution of June 20 and 28 and to take such steps as may be legally a constitutionally necessary on their part¹ both to give effect to Act and resolution.

The letter further asked the Government of India "to ensure that the constitutional framework for Sikkim provided by the act and the resolution are never altered without their concurrence.

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration : S R Shukla: P.158

Chief Minister in his second letter repeated both the demands while adding a new one for an Indian Expert to act as adviser to the Government of Sikkim for help in reorganization of the administration. He wrote "All my colleagues and indeed our assembly members and the general public as well as I have been looking forward and the Government of India's affirmative response to the deputation by them of an adviser to help us reorganize our administration and prepare rules and regulations and above all, to learning what steps the Government of India are taking to give effect to the decisions contained in the assembly resolutions relating to article 30(c) of the Government of Sikkim Act. The council of Ministers would be obliged if you kindly take up this matter again with the Government of India so that legal and constitutional measures necessary on their part can be implemented without any delay."¹

To counter the move of Chief Minister, Chogyal send some Sikkimese students who were studying in Delhi to publicise that, whatever picture painted

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration: S R Shukla: P.153

by Kazi Dorji and Indian news media is false. They said people in Sikkim are against this move of annexation of Sikkim by the Government of India.

Kazi on learning this move Chogyal, sent a note of caution to him and a note to the Government of India. In his letter to the Government of India, he urged the Government of India to advise the Chogyal to cease obstructing the wishes of the people of Sikkim since he has no locus standi in the matter. In telegrams to Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Swaran Singh, he drew attention to "the wholly unconstitutional activity of the palace. The people of Sikkim had been incensed time and again by palace intrigues. They were in no mood to tolerate any more, the Chogyal persist in trying to discuss with the Government of India, matters which he is constitutionally obliged to discuss with the Government of Sikkim, we earnestly request you to note he will have no locus standi."¹

Council of ministers wrote a letter to Chogyal also (who was at Calcutta) reminding him to discharge his responsibilities purely as constitutional head. They warned him if he would act otherwise he should be ready to face the consequences.

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration: S R Shukla:P-154.

While this war between Kazi and Chogyal was going on the bill was passed by Rajya Sabha on September, 7th.

With the passage of Bill Sikkim became Associate state of India despite Chogyal's best efforts to obstruct the passage of the Bill. But at seemed he did not reconcile with the fact and continued his war against Kazi and assembly to the best of his capability. Kazi Dorji kept the Government of India consistently informed about this movement of Chogyal. But the Government of India thought he will soon mend his way and did not pay much attention. But the things became different, when Chogyal went to participate in coronation ceremony of Prince Birendra of Nepal. He was requested by council of ministers not to go there because a lot of false and malicious propaganda against Sikkim had emanated from Nepali soil during the last six months.¹ Chogyal intentionally went to attend the coronation, more to assert his authority and free will than to defy council resolution. Chogyal's visit to Nepal paved way for exist as well as Sikkim's integration with India. In Nepal when he contacted those dignitaries who were inimical to India e.g. China and

1. Sikkim - Government and Politics: S K Jha & S N Misra: Page-60.

Pakistan, Charles Percy the U.S. Senate refused to talk on the issue of Sikkim becoming associate state saying it is India's internal matter. While the representatives from China and Pakistan, fanned his ambition and assured him to provide all possible help it he could internationalise the issue and raise it in U.N.O.

Chogyal's move brought sharp reactions in Gangtok. Sikkim Congress and Council of ministers came to conclusion that Chogyal can never mend his ways. Mr. Dorjzi said that Chogyal's continued opposition to the interest of Sikkim only showed that he did not deserve the exalted position of the constitutional head accorded to him under the new set up. "Being a dictator at heart he cannot understand, much less function in a democratic set-up. Therefore the Sikkim Congress and the Council of ministers have come to the conclusion that Chogyal can never mend his ways and therefore he must go."

A joint statement of Sikkim Congress, General Secretary, Mr. P S K Rai and Sikkim Youth Congress General Secretary, Mr. R C Podya said it would be wise for Chogyal not to come back to Sikkim here he would

not be welcomed but would ~~be~~ face the anti-Chogyal demonstration. The Chogyal had failed to learn the lesson and therefore the people would compell him to end Chogyalcracy for the good of the state.

Accordingly a resolution was passed by Sikkim Assembly in a emergency session on April 10th, that institution of Chogyal must be abolished and Sikkim is constituent unit of India. The assembly passed another resolution to hold a special poll on April 14, to enable the people to approve the above resolution.¹ Later in statement the Chief Minister called upon the people of Sikkim to give expression to their wishes and endorse the decision.

Welcoming the resolution as historic the Kazi said that this represented the culmination of the long struggle of the Sikkimese people. He said, "The Sikkimese congress enjoyed an overwhelming mandate from the people but today's resolution had the support of the sole representatives of the opposition also in the assembly."

Mr. Dorji said, "one consistent urge, which the people of Sikkim had always cherished since India's

independence had been the attainment of full democracy in Sikkim. This had always been dependent upon and inter-related with the reassertion of our historical unity with India. Despite many twists and turns, the will of Sikkimese people has progressively asserted itself overcoming the obstacles repeatedly put forward by an automatic Chogyal. Notwithstanding the loud and clear voice of the Sikkimeses people,. The Chogyal has resisted in his obstructionist tactics, attempting first to subvert the May agreement and subsequently the Government of Sikkim Act 1974. We have had enough of his intrigues, conspiracies and illegal behaviour."¹

He sent a copy of the resolution to the Government of India alongwith a formal request to give effect to the same through the due parliamentary process. In the meanwhile a special referendum was held in the whole state on April, 14 to seek the approval of assembly resolution and the same was given overwhelmingly.

Accordingly, on April 23, the constitutional (38th Amendment Bill) was moved in the Lok Sabha making Sikkim the 22nd State of Indian Union. The Bill was passed with thunderous applause by the whole house, except

1. Sikkim - The story of integration: S R Shukla: P-169.

C P I(M). The bill was discussed and passed within five hours.

Getting the news of Sikkim's merger with India, the people in Sikkim enjoyed it as their D. Day. On May 2nd, the ruling Sikkim Congress brought out a special 8-page bulletin to commend the government of India's role in assisting the Sikkimese to achieve their aspirations to join the Indian Union. The Bulletin emphasized the historical, economic, social, cultural and political necessity of the move. Commending the 38th Amendment bill, the bulletin said, "it was the will of the people. The bulletin referred the popular movement in Sikkim soon after India's independence asking for abolition of institution of Chogyal and Sikkim's merge with Indian Union. The bulletin said the destiny of the people of Sikkim is linked with India. Traditionally Sikkim has more close social, economic and political affinity with India than with any other country. Gratitude was expressed for extending 40 crores for Sikkim's 5th five year Plan.

After getting the approval of Assembly, Sikkim became India's 22nd State on May 16, 1975.

1. Sikkim : The story of Integration: S R Shukla: P-182.

CHAPTER - V

SPECIAL STATUS OF SIKKIM

Sikkim is the smallest Indian state, with an area of 7096 sq. Kms, which is 1/11th of the Assam state. It has the lowest density of population, with only 44 persons per sq. Km. The total population is 3.15 lakhs according to the census of 1981.¹ Despite its size, its importance for outweighs the other Indian states.

The status of Sikkim has seen many stages till it finally merged with the Indian Union. In the beginning of its history Sikkim was the tutelage of Tibet. Gradually with the growing influence of China over Tibet, Sikkim turned into a feudatory of China.² With the advent of British India in the Himalayan region Sikkim acquired protectorate status of British India. The lapse of British Paramountcy, left Sikkim in a controversial stage, Chogyal was of the opinion that Sikkim had the treaty relations with the British India only, and not with free India. On the otherhand the Government of free India claimed her rights over Sikkim. However Sikkim accepted its status as protectorate of India on February 27, 1948 when Standstill Agreement

1. Statistical Pocket Book - Sikkim: 1981 : P-5.

2. India's China War : Neville Maxwell: Page-37.

between Sikkim and India. ^{was signed} Meanwhile democratic forces gained ground in Sikkim and succeeded in getting the status ^{of} Associate state for Sikkim in 1974. But this could not satisfy the aspirations of the people fighting for democracy. Hence the democratically elected assembly of Sikkim passed a resolution in 1975 and Sikkim became an integral part of India, in 1975.

Though Sikkim has always been geographically a part of India, it always enjoyed special status in the past till its complete merger, which was denied to any other princely state. During the British regime, the political and commercial matters in Sikkim were looked after by the foreign department of the Government of India, while it was not so with the other states. While moving a resolution in the constituent Assembly Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru highlighted its special status by saying, "Sikkim is in a sense an Indian state but different from others."¹

India after its independence in 1947 reflected its preference for the minimum degree of intervention and other Himalayan states. Though it was treated like other princely states by the British government, the new government of free India in view of Sikkim strategic position, intended to place it in a special position

1. India-Constituent Assembly Debate official report.
Vol. 2, Page-325, January, 1947.

vis a vis other princely states of India. There was a general recognition on behalf of both the government of India and the newly established constituent Assembly that Sikkim had a special position. The Constituent Assembly at its meeting on January 22, 1947 adopted a resolution moved by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Vice President of the Viceroy's Executive Council and member in-charge of the External Affairs and Commonwealth relations, which said,

"This assembly resolves that the committee constituted by its resolution of 21st December, 1946 (to confer with the negotiating Princes and with other representatives of Indian states for certain specified purpose) shall in addition have powers to confer with such persons as committee thinks fit for the purpose of examining the special problems of Bhutan and Sikkim.¹

After independence all the other princely states were invited by the government of India to sign the Instrument of accession. But Sikkim was the only state to enhance its status enjoyed under the treaty with the British Government. Instead of acceding into India, it signed Stand Still Agreement on Feb. 27, 1948.

1. India - Constituent Assembly Debate - No. 20, p-324.

This Agreement stipulated, "All agreements relations and administrative arrangements, as to the matters of the common concern, existing between the crown & the Sikkim state on August 14, 1947, were deemed to continue between the Dominion of India and Sikkim Durbar, pending the conclusion of new agreement.¹

It seems following were the considerations, before the Government of India to accord a special *status* to Sikkim :-

- (1) India being the harbingers of anti colonialism & anti-imperialism, could not have pursued these expansionist policies for herself particularly in relation to her small neighbour, like Sikkim.
- (2) Conceding the demands of the Sikkim State Congress for the merger of Sikkim into India would have caused instability in Sikkim at that time, because the National Party wanted to maintain the separate entity of Sikkim. The government of India could have never preferred instability in such a sensitive region more so when China's expansionist designs were becoming obvious.
- (3) Merger would have caused much alarm in Nepal and Bhutan. This fear would have thrust them into China's hands. Consequently it would have posed a graver problem for Indian security.

1. Sikkim and India : Storm and Consolidation: B S K Grover: Page-87.

(4) Behru inherited the British concept of the Buffer Zone to secure India's northern border.

Sikkim was given special treatment in this sense also that Chogyal was allowed to remain in power though limited. While other state could not have this privilege.

ADDED IMPORTANCE OF SIKKIM: FOR THE SECURITY OF INDIA
IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT:

The present domestic and international political situation has given an added importance to Sikkim in the context of security of India.

For some time the Northern border of India was quiet and uneventful. However when China accepted Tibet in 1954, the Chinese territory became contiguous to India. Except the portions covered by Nepal and Bhutan, the whole of India's Northern international frontier from the trijunction of India, Afghanistan and Sinkiang in the north-west to trijunction of India, Burma and Tibet in the north-east, lies along the Sinkiang and Tibet regions of China.¹

Even before Communist China occupied Tibet, the Chinese Communist party aspired to extend its influence right up to the Bay of Bengal, claiming the entire territory once belonged to Han empire of China. Mao said...

1. The Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullik : P-87.

"The imperialistic states have taken away many Chinese dependent states, and a part of her territories Japan took away Korea, Taiwan and Ryuku Islands, England seized Burma, Bhutan and Nepal, France occupied Annam.¹

In keeping with this policy the communist China declared it did not accept Mc Mohan Line as the boundary between India and China in the North-eastern region, during the China's invasion of India in 1962.

In NEFA now known as Arunachal Pradesh, China claims 35,000 Kms. of territory as its own.¹ Though the Mc Mohan Line is not only a geographical boundary, it also divides the people into two different cultural groups living on either sides of the boundary. The people living in the north of the Mc Mohan Line are Buddhists and owe their allegiance to Tibet, while the people in the south are Vaishnavites,² belonging to the same cultural groups found in India. British India satisfied itself only by drawing the boundary between India and China on the northern frontiers and did not bother to bring the people inhabiting the region, into being main-stream of national life. Thus the north-eastern region already the weak spot due to the inaccessibility

1 & 2 . The Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullick: Page-93.

of the region became more vulnerable due to Chinese presence. The easiest and shortest route from China to Indian plains lie through Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan.¹ Unfortunately we don't have any continuous defence line in the region.

At the time of China's invasion in 1962, it was recommended by Intelligence Bureau that a special guard should be posted at Sikkim to defend the border and resist the Chinese infiltration into India.

The undefined state of frontier and the existence on our side, a population with its affinities to Tibetans or Chinese have all the elements of potential danger between China and ourselves. The recent and bitter history tells us that communism is no shield against Imperialism and Communists are as good or as bad imperialists as any other. China's ambition in this respect not only cover the Himalayan slopes on our side but also include important parts of Assam.² The China's communist imperialism is more dangerous because it has the cloak of ideological expansion which contains the racial, national and historical claims. During British regime the northern boundary was fully secure because the British dominion

1. The Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullick: Page-93.

2. The Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullick: Page-118.

extend right from Kashmir to Burma, and Tibet acted as a buffer state, between China and India.¹ Moreover China itself was a weak power. The great expanse of desert and Tibetan plateau kept China so far away from India's northern border that any threat from China was an impossible thing.

Now China is a world power with greater territorial ambition, is a great threat to our security. Sikkim, the shortest route for China to India's plains, and with its ethnic discontent poses grave security problem to India.

The recent happenings in North-eastern region, i.e. in Mizoram, Nagaland and Darjeeling is an eye-opener. According to a report released by the Defence Ministry of India, China has strengthen her position in Tibet. China has stationed 2.5 lakhs soldiers in Tibet, who are armed with the latest sophisticated weapons and at least has constructed 8 aerodromes. Which is creating a constant pressure on the north-eastern sector.¹ It is further expressed, that Sino-Pak collusion has aggravated the situation. Pakistan has already given to China, an important strategic area of Pak occupied Kashmir, in exchange of constructing Kara-

1. Dainik Jagran : 21st July, 1986

koram Highway. Pakistan is making its best efforts to capture Siachin glacier, if it succeeds, China will be in a better offensive position, more so when it the biggest army in the world.¹ China's designs are to encircle India, by turning all the neighbours hostile to her.

First of all China has won over to her side, India's traditional enemy Pakistan, by giving her all sorts of military aid, e.g. construction of strategic roads, training soldiers in guerrilla warfare and supplying military hardware. Not only this, China has provided nuclear assistance to Pakistan. Confirming the existence of secret nuclear link between Beijing and Islamabad, the president of Washington's prestigious nuclear control Institute, Dr Paul Leventhal testified before the congressional committee on Foreign Relations that China has transferred to Pakistan sensitive nuclear weapon design information.²

Sino-Pak co-operation in the field of defence either to set up defence related industry or train military personnel, has reached a level that could match the relationship between the Soviet Union and its allies or the United States and its friends.

1. Dainik Jagran : 21st July, 1986.

2. The Pioneer : 26th March, 1986.

Getting a strong influence over Pakistan and Nepal China has declared Sikkim is not the part of India.¹

It's not only Sino-Pakistan military pacts, which are the causes of great anxiety in the context of Indian security. A new development is taking place which causes much concern for the security of our northern frontier, the growing friendship between America and China. During China's invasion of India in 1962 U.S.A. not only opposed China, but helped India in modernizing her armed forces. The situation however has changed with the signing of Indo-Soviet friendship treaty in 1971 and India's growing leadership amongst non-aligned countries has annoyed America. Further The U.S. President Richard Nixon visited China in 1973 and tried to win her. At one time America used the India's northern frontier, for reconnaissance flights of U2 planes. Jawaharlal Nehru was opposed to the use of U2 but the 1962 India China war had put him in such a frame of mind that he came to accept what "others" thought was necessary to find out what China was doing.

1. Times of India : 31st December, 1984.

The necessity to seek the U2s help arose when New Delhi found that its air force could not pick up enough information on what was happening in and around Tibet,¹ which was essential for the security of our northern frontiers.

But the power equation after 1971 Bangla Desh war changed. America after loosing its hold on Iran and Afghanistan signed Sino-U.S. pact to contain Russian expansionism. Under this pact U.S. would supply satellite reconaissance photographs to China for terrain mappoing and converting them into digital maps for charting the course of Chinese nuclear missiles and their targetting.

The U.S.A. would provide selected military intelligence data to China.

America would supply the electronic sensors to China to detect potential invasion troop movement etc.

Defence analysis point out such arrangement would adversely affect India.²

The link between Chinese intrusion into eastern sector of the Himalayan frontier and the U.S. Umbrella for Pakistan with its nuclear near preparedness has to

1. The Statesman : 21st July, 1978.

2. The Pioneer : 10th April, 1984.

be noted if one has to understand in all seriousness of the dimension of India's problems with her neighbours.¹

After 20 years of calm China has laid down her claims on the eastern sector of the Sino-Indian border to an extra 5,000 sq. Kms., they have occupied by their armed aggression in 1982.²

It's not only the international political intrigues which has provided added importance to Sikkim, some internal factors are also responsible for enhancing the importance of Sikkim, particularly the secessionist movement of Mizoram, Nagaland and now Gorkhaland.³ The gravest of all having far reaching consequences is the movement of establishing Gorkhaland for Nepalese. Overtly the demand of G N L F (Gorkha National Liberation Front) appears to be quite sensible, but it contains in it deeper implications. Plea behind this demand is if Assam is for Assamese, Mizoram is for Mizo, then why not Gorkhaland is for Gorkhas.⁴

1. The Times of India : 27th July, 1986

2. Dainik Jagran: 17th July, 1986

3. India - Today -

4. Frontline : August 9-22, 1986.

G N L F leader Subhash Ghoshing argues Darjeeling was originally a part of Sikkim which was taken over by the British East India Company in 1815 through ~~forest~~ ^{agreement}, now it should be restored to Gorkhas. Nepali leadership of Darjeeling has an eye on Sikkim. The proposed Gorkhaland encloses Sikkim alongwith Darjeeling.¹ If leadership of Sikkim Nepalis aligns with G N L F leaders such a demand could well be expected. Nepalis are not only in majority in Darjeeling and Sikkim but they are politically dominant also. This would aggravate the ethnic conflict present in Sikkim.

Nitish Chakravarti, a correspondent of 'frontline' after visiting Darjeeling reports - "the agitation for Gorkhaland is more sinister in some respect than the separatism movements elsewhere in the country. The people who have plunged the hills of Darjeeling into chaos have a sanctuary across the international border. They can not only retreat into the sanctuary whenever they like but secure reinforcements- arms, infiltrators and money. Already Sikkim has been taken over by Nepali-speaking people and, if Darjeeling is made an exclusive homeland for them, it is not difficult to imagine whose sphere of influence would expand." 2

1. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : Page-111.

2. Frontline; August 9-22, 1986.

It is further reported:- Funds for the Gorkhaland agitation are obviously coming from outside. Money says the source, does not have to come in the form of hard cash. Smuggled goods, drugs and narcotics can easily be converted into cash. And, despite all the vigilance on the border, smuggling is thriving.¹

It is anybody's guess wherefrom money is coming Gorkhaland movement is getting moral support from the activities of Nar Bahadur Bhandari, the Chief Minister of Sikkim, who hails from the majority community of Nepalis in Sikkim. It seems Bhandari is not reconcile to the fact of Sikkim's status as 22nd state of Indian Union. He has created problems for internal security by his irresponsible statements on and off. He has threatened the Central Government of dire consequences if Nepali language is not included in the 8th schedule of Indian constitution and Indian citizenship is ^{not} provided to 30,000 Homeless Nepalis in Sikkim.²

Whether Subhash Geighing is a king or pawn in the Gorkhaland movement will be decided in future. At present his agitation suits Nepal's foreign policy objective of distancing away Nepal from India. Nepal's zone of peace proposal, which India stubbornly refused

1. Frontline : A-gust, 9-22, 1986.

2. Sunday: 31Aug.-6th September, 1986.

to endorse (but which has the blessings of China), is motivated besides other considerations by the idea that it would automatically nullify the Indo-Nepal treaty, a goal which Geighing has set for himself. As long as the Indo-Nepal treaty of 1950 remain in force, Nepal can do little to restrict the flow of Indians - mostly the traders - to that country or to curtail the money power, already settled there. Six millions of Hindi speaking Indians have made the Terai region of Nepal, their permanent home. Their number is almost equal to Nepalis in India. They control most of Nepal trade and remitt a huge amoung of fortune out of Nepal to India.¹

Nepal government is under pressure from the politicians and business men to reduce this imbalance. Various MPs in the Nepal's Parliaments have pleaded to extend moral support to G N L F movement.²

Nepal's support to G N L F is not of much consequence in itself. But the keen interest China's taking in Nepal to let down India is of much concern. The presence of Chinese Engineers in the construction of highway roadworks which India has never be grugged to support indicates the intentions of China in the region

1. Sunday : 31 Aug- 6 Sept. 1986.

2. Ibid.

"The Gorkhaland movement has a covetous eyes on Sikkim with its majority Nepali population plus Darjeeling based Nepali population may help better argue a case for a separate state for Nepalis.¹

This will escalate ethnic tension, feeling insecure in such atmosphere Lepcha and Bhutia community under the patronage of Chogyal would demand separate homeland for themselves. The two associations namely "Rinjyong Muttanehi Rong Tarjnm" (Sikkim Lepcha Literary Society) and "Renjyon Muttanehi Rong Tarjnm" (Sikkim Lepcha Association) are not as innocent as they appear to be.² During the agitation of 1973 we have already seen that Bhutia leaders demanded merging of west and east Sikkim with Darjeeling to carve out a separate state for Lepchas and Bhutias.³

Darjeeling and Kalimpong area is still not free from Mongoloid prejudices.⁴

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1. Sikkim : Government and Politics : S K Jha & S N Misra : Page-64.
 2. Sikkim : Government and Politics: S K Jha & S N Misra : Page-67 .
 3. Sikkim Saga : B S Das : Page-111.
 4. Chinese Betrayal : B N Mullick : Page-118.

POTENTIAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Sikkim has been a very backward region because of inaccessibility and land lockism. Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan surround it from three sides. They are themselves very backward. It is only in the south that it is connected with the plains of India and has trade relations with it. However as long as Sikkim was an independent state India could not take a hand in the development of Sikkim and Sikkim could not develop on its own resources. Thus it was only after Sikkim's integration into India as a 22nd state in 1975 that the process of economic development started in Sikkim. The first Sikkim plan for economic development was drafted with India's aid and expertise in 1954 after Nehru's visit. Sikkim was a sovereign state. Yet India granted an aid of Rs. 32.369 million¹ for the development of Sikkim. This brought Sikkim closer to India. However most of this aid was used in construction of roads and bridges.

This however, was not more than an orientation to the development, and a preparation for launching of a real economic plan. It was necessary to have

1. Sikkim and India : B S K Grover : P-104

THE infrastructure ready before any plan could be launched.

Sikkim was very backward, ^{State} 65% of the people still living on traditional agriculture. Even in 1983-84, the per capita income in Sikkim was Rupees 1,300/- as against Rs. 1891/- in the rest of India,¹ in 1982-83. The 5th and 6th Five Year Plans of India covered Sikkim also.

The 6th Five Year Plan that ended on 31st, March, 1985 had proposed an outlay of Rs. 122 crores, in Sikkim, but the actual expenditure was around 134 crores.² This plan made considerable impact on the over all economic development of the state and set in motion certain healthy impulses. Thus a very congenial atmosphere prevailed for the 7th plan is oriented.

The 7th Five Year Plan is oriented to programmes of development with the guiding principles of growth, equity and social justice, self reliance, improved efficiently and productively the different

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1. Sikkim State Draft Annual Plan- 1986-87: Published by Planning & Development Department, Government of Sikkim.
 2. Sikkim and India : B.S. K Grover : P-

heads chosen for development in 7th Plan, throws light in the potential of economic development in Sikkim.

The 7th Plan proposes an outlay of Rs. 230 crores in five years from 1985-90. The first year of the Plan has already passed and an amount of Rs- 36.6. crores has been spent. Thus it is much bigger and more ambitious plan than the previous one. The broad divisions of the plan expenditure are -

(1) Agriculture and allied services	... 48.5 crores
(2) Rural Development	3.97 crs.
(3) Irrigation and flood control	16.05 crs.
(4) Power	34.94 crs.
(5) Industry and Minerals	81.50 -do-
(6) Transport	44.68 -do-
(7) Science Technology & Environment	80.00 -do-
(8) Education	28.00 -do-
(9) Water Supply	18.00 crores
(10) Medical, Public Health, & Nutrition.	8.50 -do-
(11) Other Social services	about 9.00 crores ¹

Thus it will be seen that the main thrust of the plan is for improvement of agriculture and transport, and rightly so. As 65% of the people live on agri-

1. Sikkim State Draft-Annual Plan 1986-87: Published by Planning and Development Deptt., Govt. of Sikkim.

culture any plan that does not touch them cannot have much impact on the lives of the people. Provision of better seeds, can raise the yield almost without much investment. In this field, India can help a great deal. There is already a branch of Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Efforts are being made to raise the yield of wheat, rice, maize and milltet. Encouragement is being given for commercial crops and cash crops, which can be sent outside the state. In the 6th Five Year Plan tea plantation covered 310 acres. It is proposed that the average of tea be increased upto 500 acres.

A beginning has also been made in coffee production. The Sikkim tea is already in great demand in India and outside and has the potential of earning much foreign exchange.

Several spices are also produced in Sikkim such as Cardamom, plack pepper. Cardamom is the most important of them, is in great demand outside the state.

Sikkim produces good quality oranges. There is already a government food preservation factory at Singtem, which extracts fruit juices and cans them. The canned fruit juices are sold throughout

India in the brand name of Sikkim Supreme. The Sikkim wine made from fruit juice has a good reputation and is in great demand. The Sikkim Government is laying a special emphasis on the development of these articles as they buy revenue to the state and provide subsidiary employment to the Sikkimese people. On most of the uncultivable land, orchards are planned. A part of Sikkim, in the south and the west remains dry for sometime in the year. The Sikkim Government is developing dry farming in that region.

As a good part of Sikkim is a pasture land, animal husbandry is another branch of rural economy. With the help of the researches made in India, the breed of the cattle is being improved. The goat meat of Sikkim is in great demand in the Indian army. With the result, a branch of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) 'Goat for meat' Project has been established. The 7th Economic plan is trying to push the production of goat meat by improving the breed of goat.

Piggeries and Poultry farming is also being developed which has the function of adding to the income of the village peasants. The government is aware of the need for protecting the health of animals

and a number of veterinary hospitals have been opened.

Another notable feature of the plan is the development of fisheries.

A large part of Sikkim is covered with forest, an attempt is being made to exploit the forest wealth for timber. Sal, Teak and bamboo are important timbers there. A number of national parks have been developed to preserve wild life which has the potential of attracting tourist and earning large revenues. It may be observed that out of Rs 48.5 crores meant for agriculture and allied services; 14 crores are to be spent for crop husbandry, 9.3. crore for animal husbandry and 9.5 crores for forestry and Wild life.¹

In order to win the cooperation and conscious participation of the people in this programme of agricultural development, it is necessary to take the latest researches, scientific knowledge to the people and train the necessary man power. The Sikkim Government is fully aware of this need, and has made sufficient provision in the plan.

Next to agriculture comes power. As the rivers of Sikkim take their rise in the mountain ranges and rush towards the lower plains, there is plenty of

1. Sikkim State Draft-Annual Plan 1986-87, Published by Planning & Development Deptt., Govt. of Sikkim.

scope for hydel development. A large number of Hydel projects have been initiated.

Along with generation of electricity, arrangement is being made also for internal distribution and integration into a grid system. An ambitious rural electrification programme is also under way. A small part of this outlay is devoted to the development of non-conventional sources of energy, such as bio-gas and solar energy. Having laid the basis of economic development in this way, it is necessary to pay heed to the development of infra-structure in this state, specially roads and bridges and transport services. Several parts of Sikkim are still, inaccessible.

At the close of the 6th Plan the total road length was 1241 Kms. comprising 246 Kms of standard surfaced roads, 505 Kms. of standard unsurfaced road and 490 Kms. of non-standard roads with narrow formation and weak pavement.¹ As far bridges only three bridges of the 22 weak ones were sought to be replaced. In accordance with a comprehensive master Plan

1. Sikkim State Draft - Annual Plan 1986-87: Published by planning & Development Deptt., Govt. of Sikkim.

prepared by the state P.W.D. a total length of 1115 Kms. of road would be required to connect all the villages in the state. It is in this background that the 7th Plan has allocated as much amount to road development and transport services as to the agriculture.

Another construction work which is equally necessary is irrigation and flood control. Sikkim is a state with heavy downpour and the rained water flowing downwards on the hill slopes washes away the soil. The flood caused by the heavy rain submerges crops and destroy houses.

Most of the towns are situated on the banks of rivers and their inhabitants suffer from floods. During the 6th Plan River Banks' Protection Works were taken up at 6 places. This programme is to be continued in future also. This rain water and river water can be used for irrigation. The ultimate irrigation potential of the state has been assessed as 80,000 hectares.¹ In the 6th Plan an additional potential was created for the irrigation of 6,200 hectares.² The 7th Plan target is 8,000 hectares. Upto the 6th Plan

1 & 2 . SIKKIM STATE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN- 1985-86.

3. SIKKIM STATE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN - 1986-87.

only hill channels were constructed, mostly open and some with pipes. In the 7th Plan, storage schemes have also been included in addition to the hill channels.

The construction of infra-structure like roads and bridges, transport facilities and the availability of power are other necessary requirements for the growth of the industries in the state. A beginning can only be made with the improvement of the existing handicraft and the small scale industries.

The Sikkim handicraft is in great demand in & outside India. To create a wider base for the handicraft at the village level efforts have been made by the state Government to train rural artisans in cutting tailoring, knitting, carpet weaving, carpentry, cane & bamboo-craft etc. Carpets of Sikkim have a good reputations and so are the articles made from bamboo. The state government has set up a district industry centre in 1978 which is providing equipments, raw material, credit facilities and other inputs. One mini industrial estate has also been set up at Jorethang and another is likely to be set up at Tadong. For the purpose of developing cottage and village industry. A cottage Industries Development Corporation has also been established.

In 1977 Sikkim Industrial Development Investment Corporation was established playing the dual role, firstly as a state Financial Corporation and secondly as Small Industrial Development Corporation. The share of Corporation is 200 lakhs and the same amount is being given by Industrial Development Bank of India.

Sikkim Flour Mill Ltd. was installed in 1980 with an installed milling capacity of 30 MTs. per day with increasing demand of wheat based products the capacity is being raised to 50 MTs. per day.¹

Sikkim Time Corporation Ltd. set up in collaboration with Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd. It is producing wrist watches and stainless steel watch crowns. The Corporation has proposed to set up tool room facilities as the same is not available in the neighbouring region.

The Sikkim Mining Corporation in a joint undertaking with the Government of India has found out the deposits of dolomite, low grade coal. There are hopes that a huge deposits of silica, magnesia rocks and lime stone may be obtained in Ranjit Valley.

1. SIKKIM STATE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN - 1986-87.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE OF SIKKIM.

In view of the strategic importance of Sikkim, as outlined earlier in this chapter, it is important that the people of Sikkim, should be emotionally integrated into the Indian Nationhood and the tie between this tiny Himalayan kingdom and the Indian Union be made as strong as possible.

India is a federal country and the states also have considerable rights. There is a demand from states that they should have more autonomy and more financial powers. This urge of the people of states for more power has to be reasonably balanced with the need for keeping India united and strong.

The first thing is the emotional integration of the people of Sikkim with the rest of the Indian population. As Mr. B.S. Das has pointed out " Emotional integration is far more difficult than territorial integration."¹

This has become more difficult because of the geographical factor which has kept this part of India, almost out of reach from the Indian mainland. The people here have led

The Sikkim Saga:- B. S. Das P-3

and independent life for hundred of years and have their own social customs and cultural traditions. They are suspicious even of the least and alien influence on their society and react strongly against it. This isolation of Sikkimese people from any kind of non Sikkimese influence is a thing of past now. As their will be more and more political intigration, Sikkimese will be going out of their state and meeting none Sikkimese teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, administrators and technicians, would be coming to Sikkim, to take part in the developmental process. Their presence can not but affect the life of the people in Sikkim. Their social custom and their culture. The spread of education itself has a great de-segregational effect. If this process goes on smoothly both social and emotional intigration will take place. However if the non-Sikkimese coming in to Sikkim show any superiority or exploit the poverty and ingnорance of the Sikkimese people, a reaction will be inevitable. As B.S. Das has observed when, Sikkim had not merged into India Sikkimese officials, and its political leaders were given a treatement matching those given to foreigners.¹

The Sikkim Saga:- B. S. Das P-60

Sikkim was then administered by the department of foreign office of the Union government. This treatment suddenly disappeared when merged into India, and the Home Department was to cover the charge of Sikkim. Curiously enough the attitude of Indian officials going to Sikkim also changed. Their dominating attitude was mis understood and resented.¹ Care therefore has to be taken that this social, and cultural conflict does not take place. If need be a special section of the Home Department may be created to deal with the states and the people of different social cultural background such as Sikkimese Nagas, Mezos or the Adivasis in different parts of India, and the officials or other non-Sikkimese allowed to enter Sikkim may be screened to ensure, that the people going there are sympathetic to Sikkimese people and show due respect to their social and cultural values.

Media has a great role to play in this process. It can however be impressed upon news papers and magazines of non-Sikkimese origin that they should help in this process by sympathetically highlighting the problems of the Sikkimese and showing understanding and consideration

Sikkim Saga:- B.S. Das P-60

to the people. At the same time these news papers and magazines impress upon, the more sophisticated cultured, and highly placed Indians, that it is only by winning the love of Sikkimese and such other backward people, specially on the border, that they can make India secure and strong.

Radio and Televisions are entirely in the hands of the Governments, and can be used effectively to promote emotional integration. Happily the Government of India under Rajiv Gandhi has realised the importance of culture as a factor in emotional integration. Government has established many cultural centres in different parts of India, to promote the distinct culture of the region. This has the effect of making all Indians realize that the cultural life of every region, though different from other regions, is as rich as any other.

As the geographical factor has been largely responsible for the isolation of Sikkim from the rest of the India. Construction of roads and bridges is important for bringing them into the mainstream of the Indian life.

As roads and bridges spread out the necessities of life available in India will reach the people of Sikkim and make their life easier and more comfortable. Their own produce, fruits, milk products, wool, wollengoods and handicrafts will find markets in the rest of India making the ordinary Sikkimese aware of his inter-dependence with the rest of India. Even in agriculture the research conducted in the rest of India and improved agricultural inputs, such as better seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides and agricultural implements can be used to improve the agriculture. All this is being done. This has the effect of breaking the isolation of Sikkim people and softening their suspicions to wards non-Sikkimese. This process must be kept up. The Government can establish an increasing number of Sikkim houses in different parts of India for promoting the sale of Sikkim products in an organised manner and establish a distribution system inside Sikkim for selling the goods from other parts of India at fair price shop.

Jawahar Lal Nehru once said " If backwardness of India in various fields is to be removed and crucial problems of transforming her from under developed area into a great modern nation is to be solved (by raising the standard of living, health, education and of general welfare) then the planning of all this has to be under a central direction unhampered by the State Government."¹

This approach overemphasised the centralized character of economic planning and ignores completely its effects on the people of the state, who begin to feel alienated. Another defect in this approach is that the officials formulating and implementing plans of economic development begin to act hypothetically ignoring the needs and the difficulties of the local people. Their dominating attitudes produces schism. The danger is as B.S. Das has observed " Soon after the merger large inputs of aid and implementation of new scheme within a short period created many ethnic, political

The Political Biography of Nehru:- Michael Brecher P-231

and economic problems, which the new Government under Kazi Lhendhup Dorji was incapable of facing. Nor was the local bureaucracy adequate to handle the situation. Kazi's defeat in 1979 was a sequel to this".¹

These pitfalls have to be avoided, so that a balance is struck and while the state is economically develop the social and cultural values of the local people are not unduly disturbed and they are not emotionally alienated.

Politically the most important thing is that the fissiparous and divisive forces in Sikkim are defeated and the Sikkimese begin to identify themselves as a part of the Indian community.

Sikkim has always had its separate and distinctive political identity and the Sikkimese never regarded themselves anything but Sikkimese. For them it is a new experience to regard themselves Indian and backward as they are it is a very difficult task. It is only through education and political propaganda as well as through conscious administrative effort that the young generation can be trained to think in a different way.

The Sikkim Saga:- B.S. Das P-VII

However it is not so simple a process. When India became Independent ,it was Maharaja of Sikkim, who wanted to preserve his identity and keep Sikkim a separate land. He would take aid from the Govt. of India and would even agree that to become a protectorate but he insisted that he should remain independent in his internal affairs. The people of Sikkim ,organised under the leadership of Kazi Ihendup Dorji and agitated for the merger of Sikkim with India and their representative in the Sikkim Assembly voted for it. Wangchuk the son of late Chogyal, Paldhen Thondup Namgyal, in an interview to India today,¹ accepted that his frather could not reconcile with the merger of Sikkim and he wanted the separate identity of Sikkim. The Maharaja perhaps thought by merging Sikkim into India his own identity would be lost like all other princes of India. The Maharaja of Sikkim owns about half of the fertile land of Sikkim and as much of the forest wealth also. In that kingly set up of Sikkim there are a large number of big and small land ownership too, which were obtained from the Maharaja either as a result of their office in the state or blood relationship and grants.

1. India Today : March 15, 1982.

The merger of Sikkim into India has put a question mark on their continuance. Once the people get organised and politicalised, they are sure to move towards the abolition of all princely privileges and vested interests. It is but natural for the erstwhile landowners and blood relations of Maharaja to wish for a return of old age. It is significant to note that they avail every opportunity to express their solidarity with the old king and his family. When Palden Thondup Namgyal, who ruled Sikkim before its merger into India, died in America in 1982 and his dead body was brought to Sikkim for cremation, a large number of his supporters including 10 M L As of Ruling party assembled to pay homage to the late king. Inspired by the presence of thousands of people at the cremation, the Pro-Chogyal section took a very bold step to present silken scarves to his son Wangchuk, to signify that, they recognise him as their new Chogyal.¹

This incident itself points to a danger that given a favourable opportunity, this section might go to any length to bring about a secession of Sikkim from India.

1. India Today : 15th March, 1982.

The pro-Chogyal faction mostly Bhutia, which is culturally and in religion linked with Tibetans, all of them belong to Sino-Tibetan stock. Disgruntled Bhutia vested interests may well establish contacts across the border in their bid for secession.

However the recent political development have brought about a change in the attitude of Lepcha-Bhutia communities. This has been the result of growing Nepali militancy,¹ and the fear, that they may be submerged into the Nepali majority and thus loose their identity. As the Nepali movement began to veer to more regional autonomy and took an anti centre stance, the Lepcha Bhutia communities, turned more and more in favour of merger with India.²

This is the right moment when the vested interests can be isolated and be deprived of their privileges, to the benefit of the common people. A drastic land reform and ceiling on land, may well cut-down the power of the big land owners, and reduce a separation between the privileged section of Bhutias and Lepchas and commoners of those communities.

1. Frontline : August 9-22, 1986.

2. India Today : September 15, 1984.

Kazi Lhendup Dorji was a first political leader of importance who led the Sikkimese people against the Maharaja and got Sikkim's merger into India. He initiated democratic processes. In the beginning he was the leader of Sikkim National Congress, when Sikkim merged into India in 1975. Soon after he joined the mainstream of national life by merging his party into Indian National Congress. However young as a Sikkim state was the political turmoil in India in 1977 caught Sikkim also in its grip and Kazi Dorji had to save himself by leaving the Congress and joining the Janta Party..Here started his downfall. The people of Sikkim were not yet ready to merge their identity. His credibility was eroded and he was charged as the stooge of Delhi. The result was that he was defeated in 1979 Assembly election and political powers in Sikkim passed into the hands of Nar Bahadur Bhandari. With the defeat of Kazi Lhendup Dorji regionalism began to raise its ugly head as Dr. Jha has rightly observed, "With the downfall of this father political figure in 1979 and the emergence of many splinter groups and forces, things began taking disheartening shape. Regionalism was the paramount force when the 1979 Assembly election was held and almost all the political parties fully exploited the

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regional cult and promised regional heaven, cut off from the mainstream, a heaven of Sikkim for the Sikkimese, without fear of exploitation from the rest of the world."¹

The new Chief Minister of Sikkim, Nar Bahadur Bhandari belonged to Sikkim Parishad which was a regional organisation catering to regional sentiments of the local people. He had made all sorts of promises to them at the time of election in 1979 and to strengthen his position he initiated a very dangerous regional cult.

Sikkim Parishad Party functioned as a ruling party till 6th July, 1981.² Then it merged into Congress - I. At the sametime he spoke many irresponsible things, such as "jobs are secured only for local people" and "we have already sent back most of the deputationists who came here as technical men. Now we will be employing fewer technicians on deputations".³

This inconsistent behaviour shows that how mistaken the Congress-I leaders were to support him in 1979 election, against Kazi Lhendup Dorji, who was all in all, a Nationalist.

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1. Sikkim - Government & Politics: S K Jha & S N Misra
P-65-66.
 2. Sikkim - Government & Politics: S K Jha & S N Misra
P-66.
 3. Sikkim - Government & Politics: S K Jha & S N Misra
P-66.

Nar Bahadur Bhandari is a Nepali and the Nepalis are in majority in Sikkim. In order to win the support of that community he began to voice their demands. The Union Government feared that Nar Bahadur Bhandari was promoting regionalism, which could lead to a link up with the Nepali communities in the neighbouring states and strengthen secessionist forces. He was therefore dismissed in June, 1984.¹ This was most ill timed and ill planned step, as Hindustan Times 'Editorial' comments² -

"president's rule under the circumstances, is as undemocratic and unconstitutional as earlier dismissal of Bhandari Ministry..... The centre has not covered itself with the glory by this action."

Most of the Nepalis were convinced that Nar Bahadur Bhandari was sacked because he championed their cause.³ The working President of Nepali Bhasa Samiti, Jagat Chetri said, "The centre wanted Bhandari to forego the three demands i.e. inclusion of Nepali in the 8th schedule, citizenship for 30,000 stateless Nepalis and reservation of seats for Nepali speaking people."⁴

1. The Pioneer : 12th May, 1984.

2. India Today : June 15, 1984.

3.& 4. India Today : August 31, 1984.

Thus the Nepali factor in Sikkim have a very important role to play and on its tactful handling by the Government of India, depends the success of the process of National Integration. Particularly, the integration Sikkim into the mainstream of Indian National life.

There are about 6 million¹ Nepali speaking Indians, scattered all over India. They are concentrated in Sikkim and its neighbouring state of Meghalaya and northern part of West Bengal and the Terai region of Bihar, U.P. and Himanchal Pradesh. Their language Nepali is claimed to be the lingua franca of more than 20 million² people in the region. Even before the Lok Sabha Election of 1980, the Nepali Bhasa movement had begun to demand the inclusion of Nepali in the 8th schedule of Indian constitution. Prem Kumar Allay, the president of All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti claimed that before the Lok Sabha Election of 1980 Mrs. Gandhi herself agreed that this demand was justified and complains that when he met her in 1983 she backtracked and said, she had problems in acceding to their demands.³

The Samiti organized a hunger strike in February 1984. It was broken up by the Police and the leaders were arrested. This has only made the Nepalis more determined.

1, 2 & 3. India Today, : August 31, 1984.

This Nepali movement has found an echo in the northern region of West Bengal. The strong desire of Darjeeling's Nepali speaking people to establish their Indian identity has convinced them of a need for a separate state within India. In 1982 CPI(M), M.P. from the region, Anand Pathak submitted a bill in the Parliament seeking regional autonomy for the district, however the left Front government of West Bengal has refused to grant any real power to the Hill Development Council, formed in the Nepali dominated district of West Bengal.¹

Thus the Indian Nepalis have become disillusioned not only with the ruling Congress-I Party but also with the CPI(M) and the left front government of West Bengal. The recent outburst of the agitation and violence in and around Darjeeling² is a pointer to the dangers inherent in this movement unless it is properly tackled.

It is interesting to note that the Congress-I party of West Bengal declared that the demand for a separate state within India was not an anti Indian move.

1. India Today : August 31, 1984.

2. Sunday : 31 August - 6 September, 1986.

The young Prime Minister, Rajeev Gandhi, has successfully negotiated with the agitators in Assam, Mizoram and Punjab. The Nepali movement is another challenge that he faces. It is not possible to suppress this demand for the inclusion of Nepali in 8th schedule. The identification of the Indian Nepalis as Indians and carving out a region to satisfy Nepali sentiments, and give its regional autonomy. The Indian Nepalis and the Nepali Indians living in the Terai regions and speaking Nepali form one geographical unit and the freedom of entry from one to the other country is a problem, but this need not lead to the abrogation of Section 7 of Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1955. The Indian Nepalis have to be identified and given Indian citizenship without putting any kind of restriction on the entry of Nepalis from Nepal into India. Delay in meeting justified demands would lead only to the worsening of the situation, Panjab, Mizoram are the recent example before us.

It can be concluded in the words of R B Bedi that, "The security of India is tied to Sikkim, which lies on the shortest route between Tibet and the plains of India. Nathu La is the sensitive chink in our armour. The Chumbi Valley, shaped like a dagger, points to the vulnerable neck of Siliguri. It is important, therefore

that Indian troops stationed in Sikkim should not be constantly diverted by internal strife."¹

There is a silver lining in the dark clouds of regional forces, which can be explained in the words of Dr. S K Jha, "This need not cause any anxiety, luckily, there are certain indications that the old feudal order, despite its clever manipulation of sub-nationalism, cannot be reviewed. The people of Sikkim of all shades and hues have tested the fruit of democracy and they are not going to barter this for any brand of sub-nationalism or cultural nationalism. So democracy has to be fitted into the regional frame to deliver the goods. The elements fostering sub-nationalism have to be contained by democracy. This is where the Central Government has to play its role. It should not ignore regional aspiration and regional mood. It should try to fulfil the long felt genuine needs of the State, so that it can march in tune with the rest of the country, only then nationalism can be made safe and secure in Sikkim." ²

1. The Illustrated Weekly of India : October 13, 1974.

2. Sikkim - Government & Politics : S K Jha & S N Misra,
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